

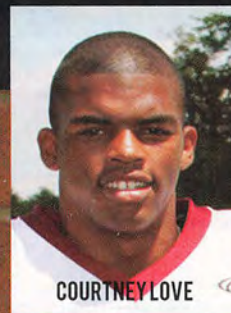
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# HUSKERS

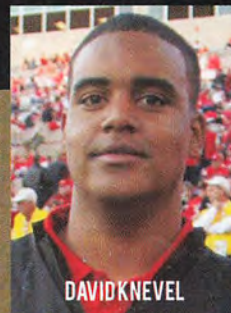
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JOHNNY STANTON



COURTNEY LOVE



DAVID KNEVEL

INSIDE: BIOS ON EACH OF THE 26  
PLAYERS IN NU'S CLASS OF 2013



## FAMILY TIES

BANDERAS, FOUR OTHERS IN 2013 CLASS HAVE  
HAD FATHER OR BROTHER PLAY FOR THE HUSKERS



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### 2013 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME	TV
APR. 6	RED-WHITE GAME	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
AUG. 31	WYOMING	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
SEPT. 7	SOUTHERN MISS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
SEPT. 14	UCLA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
SEPT. 21	SOUTH DAKOTA STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
OCT. 5	ILLINOIS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
OCT. 12	@PURDUE	WEST LAFAYETTE, IND.	TBA	TBA
OCT. 26	@MINNESOTA	MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.	TBA	TBA
NOV. 2	NORTHWESTERN	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
NOV. 9	@MICHIGAN	ANN ARBOR, MICH.	TBA	TBA
NOV. 16	MICHIGAN STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
NOV. 23	@PENN STATE	STATE COLLEGE, PA.	TBA	TBA
NOV. 30	IOWA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
DEC. 7	@BIG TEN TITLE GAME	INDIANAPOLIS, IND.	TBA	TBA



## ON THE COVER

Lincoln Southwest senior Josh Banderas receives a congratulatory handshake from head football coach Mark King while his father Tom Banderas looks on. Banderas is a second-generation NU football player and the only in-state scholarship recipient in the Class of 2013.

PHOTO BY DARREN IVY



## NU LEGACIES CONTINUE FOR FIVE MEMBERS OF HUSKERS' CLASS OF 2013

Three are second-generation  
Nebraska football players

**DURING THE 1980S, TOM BANDERAS, KENNETH GRAEBER AND DOUG GLASER WERE ALL MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA FOOTBALL PROGRAM.**

**SINCE THEN THE THREE FORMER HUSKER PLAYERS HAVE GONE SEPARATE WAYS WITH GLASER GOING BACK TO TEXAS, BANDERAS STAYING IN LINCOLN AND GRAEBER SETTling IN THE OMAHA AREA.**

**AFTER SIGNING DAY ON FEB. 6, THE THREE OF THEM WILL SHARE SOMETHING IN COMMON AGAIN WITH THEIR SONS ALL BEING PART OF THE HUSKERS' CLASS OF 2013. JOSH BANDERAS WAS THE LONE IN-STATE SIGNED TO EARN A SCHOLARSHIP, WHILE STEVE GRAEBER AND DUSTIN GLASER ARE BOTH WALK-ONS.**

In addition to these second-generation Huskers, Drake Martinez and Erik Evans will join older brothers Taylor Martinez and Tyler Evans on the field this fall.

This Husker legacy, as many have called it, is a very important part of carrying on the Big Red tradition and rebuilding the program to national championship contenders and is something that is not lost on NU head coach Bo Pelini.

"Having former players, I guess you would call them legacies, to me it is just like the importance of the walk-on program and football in the state, and making sure the state is represented," Pelini said. "When you recruit across the country and nationwide, the single most important thing or biggest challenge as a coach is to get all those kids who are coming in from across the country to buy into a certain culture and tradition at Nebraska that is different than any other



place in the country.

"Having the walk-ons, in-state kids, families who have been through this and understand what this football program is all about, makes that culture stronger faster. That is a very important part of our program and it always will be. It's nice to have that representation in this class."

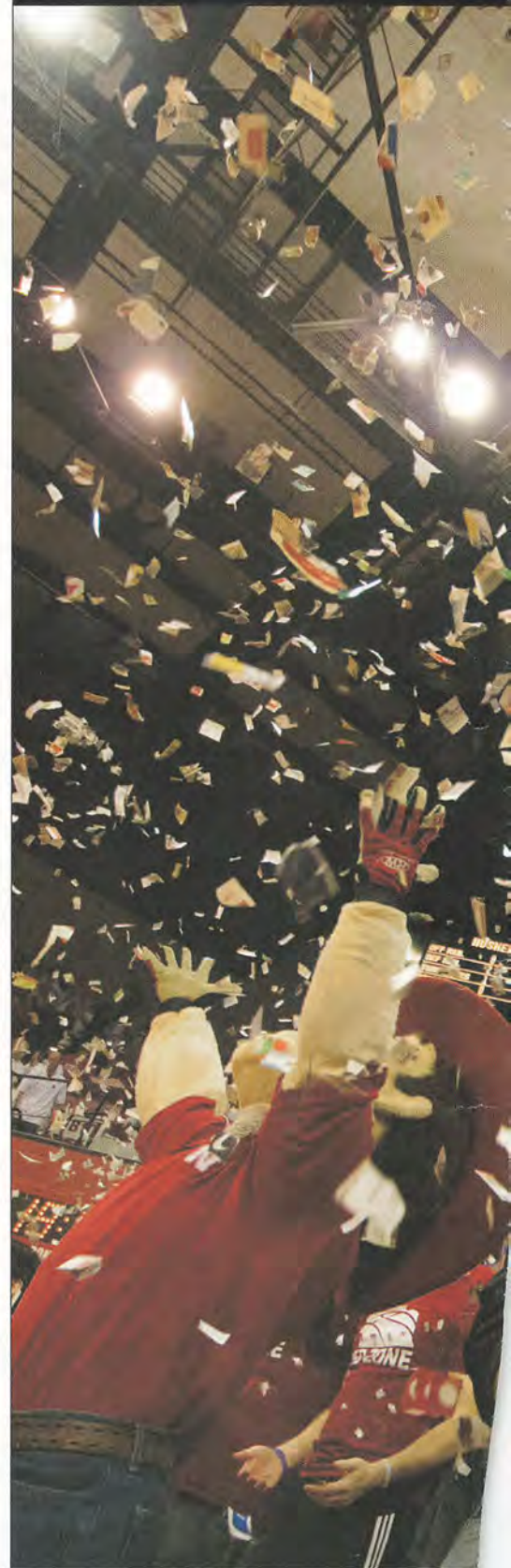
Tom Banderas understands that culture that Pelini is trying to rebuild.

"When Tom Osborne sat in your living room, it made quite an impression," Tom said. "In 1983, Tom Osborne walking into your house would be like Nick Saban walking in today."

"That is what Josh tried to convey during the recruiting to help these kids understand what we are trying to get back to – what the Blackshirts really meant, when teams would come on the field and we would already be up 3-0 or 6-0 on them. That was the mentality that was instilled in us by Coach Charlie McBride and Tom Osborne. That is what we need to get back to. There is something about saying we are going to win and knowing we are going to win.

"He's grown up with it and that is what he is going to try and bring in because he has talked with Broderick Thomas, Neil Smith and Mark Munford. Those are my buddies and teammates. He understands. That is what you get from generations."

Banderas said he liked the direction the program was going under Pelini and is hopeful that these second-generation players and the rest of the Class of 2013 can help the team take the next steps, like winning a Big Ten championship and Rose Bowl and getting the program back to a top five program year in and year out like it was during his time donning the red and white uniform.





# Behind the **N** Red Zone Rowdies

PHOTO BY RANCE RISTAU



Nebraska fans celebrate during the Huskers' home men's basketball game against Illinois.



# 2013 Football Signees

## SCHOLARSHIP SIGNEES

Name (247Sports Ranking)	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown	High School/Junior College
Josh Banderas ★★★★★ (90)	LB	6-2	220	Lincoln, Neb.	Lincoln Southwest HS
Cethan Carter ★★★★★ (89)	TE	6-4	230	Metairie, La.	Archbishop Rummel HS
Maliek Collins ★★★★★ (85)	DT	6-2	285	Kansas City, Mo.	Center HS
Tre'vell Dixon ★★★★★ (85)	WR	6-1	185	Baldwin, La.	West Saint Mary HS
Matt Finnin ★★★★★ (82)	OL	6-7	305	Crete, Ill.	Crete Monee HS/Western Michigan/College of DuPage
Nathan Gerry ★★★★★ (84)	DB	6-2	210	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Washington HS
Kevin Gladney ★★★★★ (83)	WR	6-1	185	Akron, Ohio	Firestone Senior HS
Randy Gregory ★★★★★ (96)	DE	6-6	230	Fishers, Ind.	Hamilton Southeastern HS/Arizona Western CC
Zach Hannon ★★★★★ (87)	OL	6-5	295	Kansas City, Mo.	Rockhurst HS
Greg Hart ★★★★★ (85)	TE	6-5	225	Dayton, Ohio	Archbishop Alter HS
Dwayne Johnson ★★★★★ (87)	OL	6-6	275	Pearland, Texas	Bellaire HS
Boaz Joseph ★★★★★ (83)	DB	6-1	190	Weston, Fla.	Cypress Bay HS
David Knevel* ★★★★★ (91)	OL	6-9	300	Brantford, Ontario	Pauline Johnson Collegiate HS
Chongo Kondolo ★★★★★ (85)	OL	6-4	290	Carrollton, Texas	Creekview HS/Fresno City College
Courtney Love* ★★★★★ (90)	LB	6-1	225	Youngstown, Ohio	Cardinal Mooney HS
Drake Martinez ★★★★★ (83)	DB	6-2	200	Laguna Beach, Calif.	Laguna Beach HS
Kevin Maurice ★★★★★ (82)	DT	6-3	270	Orlando, Fla.	Freedom HS
Gabe Miller ★★★★★ (72)	LS	6-0	235	Mishawaka, Ind.	Penn HS
Dimarya Mixon ★★★★★ (88)	DE	6-3	265	Mesquite, Texas	West Mesquite HS
A.J. Natter ★★★★★ (88)	DE	6-5	240	Milton, Wis.	Milton HS
Marcus Newby ★★★★★ (94)	LB	6-1	210	North Potomac, Md.	Quince Orchard HS
Terrell Newby ★★★★★ (94)	RB	5-10	180	West Hills, Calif.	Chaminade HS
D.J. Singleton* ★★★★★ (87)	DB	6-1	195	Jersey City, N.J.	St. Peter's Prep HS
Johnny Stanton ★★★★★ (90)	QB	6-2	220	Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif.	Santa Margarita Catholic HS
Ernest Suttles ★★★★★ (88)	DE	6-5	240	Tampa, Fla.	Gaither HS
Adam Taylor ★★★★★ (90)	RB	6-2	200	Katy, Texas	Katy HS

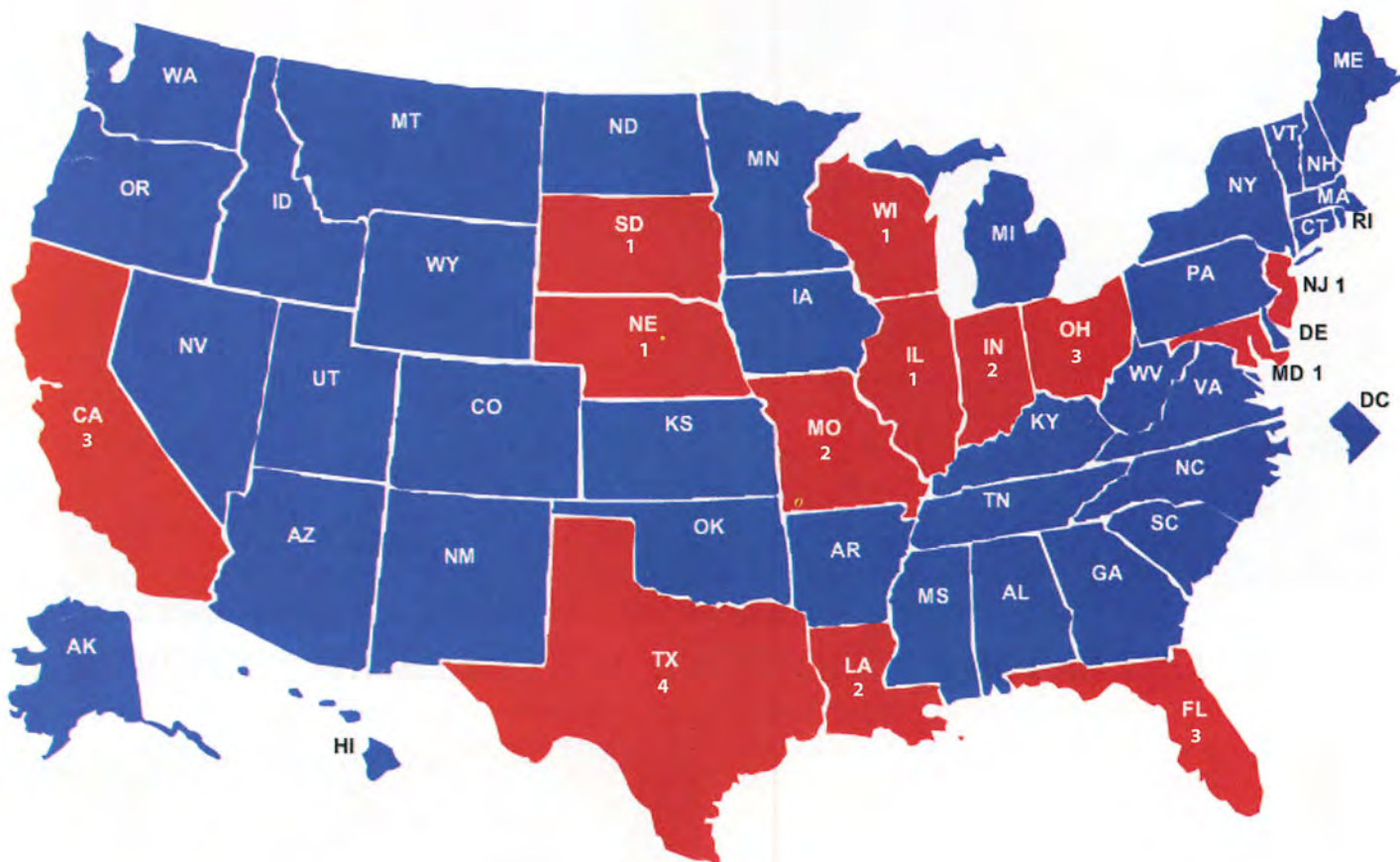
\*-enrolled at Nebraska in January

## WALK-ON COMMITS

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown	High School/Junior College
Jordan Ackerman	DE/TE	6-3	245	Lincoln, Neb.	Lincoln Southeast HS
Jordan Bellar	P	6-0	165	Norfolk, Neb.	Norfolk Catholic HS
Erik Evans	TE	6-3	220	Waverly, Neb.	Waverly HS
Jack Fordon	LB	6-2	220	Frankfort, Ill.	Providence Catholic HS
Dustin Glaser	OL	6-3	285	Flower Mound, Texas	Flower Mound HS
Steve Graeber	DT	6-1	255	Omaha, Neb.	Millard North HS
Harrison Jordan	FB	5-10	235	Omaha, Neb.	Westside HS
Connor Ketter	TE	6-5	220	Norfolk, Neb.	Norfolk Catholic HS
Landon Kubicek	OL	6-4	310	Lincoln, Neb.	Lincoln Southeast HS
Spencer Lewis	WR	6-2	210	Papillion, Neb.	Papillion-LaVista HS
Grant Schumacher	PK	5-9	155	Lincoln, Neb.	Lincoln Pius X HS
Zach Stovall	DB	5-11	185	Bellevue, Neb.	Bellevue East HS
Chris Weber	LB	6-3	205	Omaha, Neb.	Elkhorn HS



# 2013 Recruits by State



## TEXAS (4)

Johnson (Pearland), Kondolo (Carrollton), Mixon (Mesquite), Taylor (Katy)

## CALIFORNIA (3)

Martinez (Laguna Beach), T. Newby (West Hills), Stanton (Rancho Santa Margarita)

## FLORIDA (3)

Joseph (Weston), Maurice (Orlando), Suttles (Tampa)

## OHIO (3)

Gladney (Akron), Hart (Dayton), Love (Youngstown)

## INDIANA (2)

Gregory (Fishers), Miller (Mishawaka)

## LOUISIANA (2)

Carter (Metairie), Dixon (Baldwin)

## MISSOURI (2)

Collins (Kansas City), Hannon (Kansas City)

## ILLINOIS (1)

Finnin (Crete)

## MARYLAND (1)

M. Newby (North Potomac)

## NEBRASKA (1)

Banderas (Lincoln)

## NEW JERSEY (1)

Singleton (Jersey City)

## SOUTH DAKOTA (1)

Gerry (Sioux Falls)

## WISCONSIN (1)

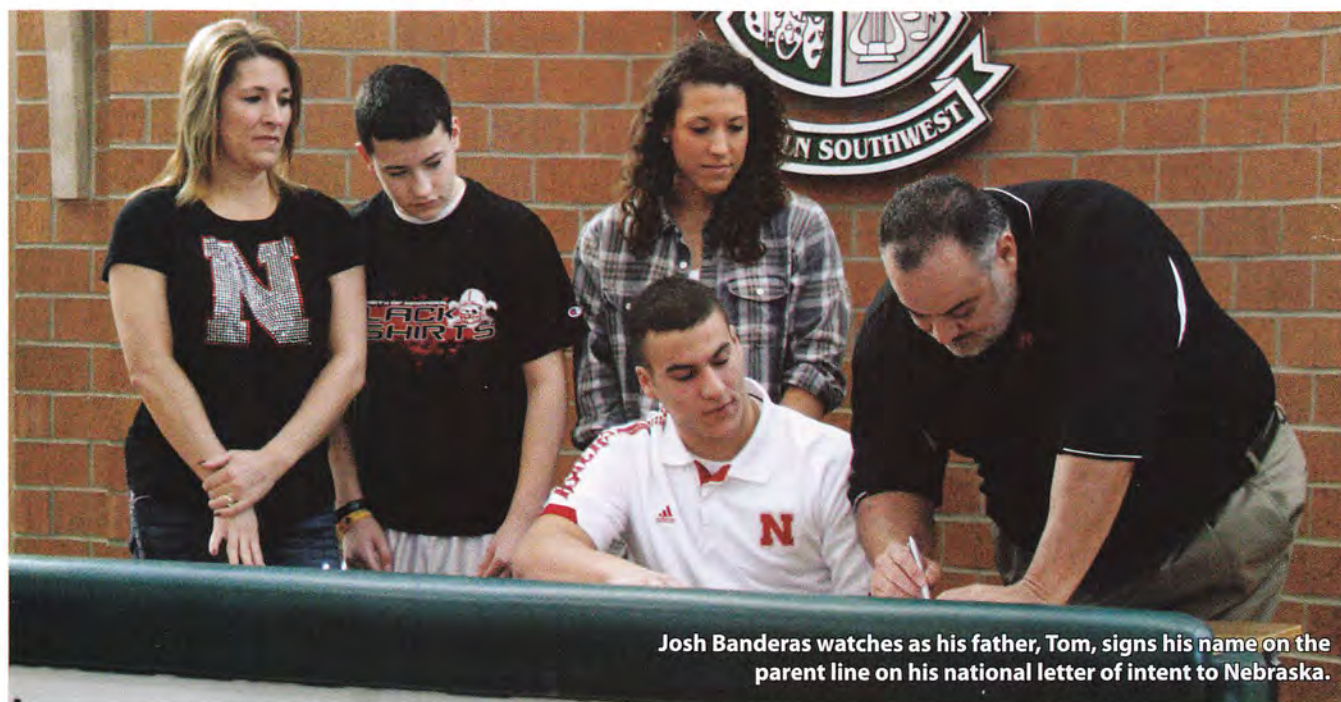
Natter (Milton)

## CANADA (1)

Knevel (Brantford, Ontario)



# Homegrown Husker



Josh Banderas watches as his father, Tom, signs his name on the parent line on his national letter of intent to Nebraska.

## Banderas is lone Nebraska scholarship recipient

STORY & ABOVE PHOTO BY DARREN IVY | BELOW PHOTO FROM HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED ARCHIVES

**L**incoln Southwest senior football player Josh Banderas doesn't take his responsibilities lightly knowing that he is the only Nebraska high school player to be among the scholarship recipients in the Cornhuskers' Class of 2013 football recruits.

"Last year there was only one [Sam Cotton out of Lincoln Southeast] also, so out of all the high schools in Nebraska, it is a huge honor," said Banderas, who is a 6-foot-2, 220-pound linebacker. "I have worked really hard for this and I am happy that this day has finally come. This ranks pretty high up there. I have nothing but a smile on my face and I can't wait to go there."

Banderas was joined by his family, friends, classmates, fellow college signees and about every media outlet in the state for a signing ceremony at Southwest High School on Feb. 6.

"Even when I started playing football, I knew my goal throughout my whole life was to play football at Nebraska and be like by dad," Josh said. "That is where I wanted to be."

Josh's college signing was a stark contrast to the national letter of intent that his father, Tom Banderas, had signed to Nebraska in 1983 at Oak Grove High School in Oak Grove, Mo.

"He didn't have all this when he was signed," Josh said. "He can experience it through me. It means a lot to me. It's unreal to do exactly like he did and maybe do even better at Nebraska."

Tom, who has lived in Lincoln and worked as an insurance agent for Farm Bureau since shortly after his playing days ended for the Huskers in 1987, said it was his coaches, family and a few classmates who witnessed his signing.

"You didn't have the media circus you do now," Tom said. "There weren't ratings. They had a Blue Chippers magazine, and



Tom Banderas was a tight end for NU from 1985-87.



I was in that, along with Brian Bosworth. The year before, I was in there with Marcus Dupree.

"There was one story about me that ran in the *Kansas City Star*. It showed Notre Dame's recruiting board, and I was the No. 1 name on the board."

Back then as a high schooler at Class B size school, Tom admitted that didn't know a whole lot about the Huskers.

"I had to do some studying when they offered me," Tom said. "I started looking and I was like, 'they're pretty good.'"

After taking a visit to Colorado and his second visit to Nebraska, he canceled his final two visits and committed to Coach Tom Osborne.

"When Tom Osborne sat in your living room, it made quite an impression," Tom said. "In 1983, Tom Osborne walking into your house would be like Nick Saban walking in today."

There was never any doubts about where the younger Banderas wanted to go, especially after seeing his father put on his old NU helmet in a moment that was captured in a family photograph.

"My dad was in his [Nebraska] helmet and I was wearing a (potato) chip bowl," Josh said. "That's when I first knew I wanted to play football."

He played catch with his father in the backyard and got to hang out on the sidelines with his father and his former teammates like Neil Smith and Broderick Thomas.

"I remember my first Husker game," Josh said. "I saw a guy get his tooth knocked out. I talked about it for two weeks."

Josh also remembers his first midget football practice at Lincoln Southeast.

"I felt comfortable in pads," Josh said. "That first hitting drill was the most awesome ever. I knew I was going to do it for a long, long time."

Tom coached his son throughout mid-level football, and instilled some things that most others hadn't even thought about at that age.

"I tried to teach all the boys the mental stuff," Tom said. "Everyone always thinks it's the physical size, but it's the six inches between your ears that gets you to the next level. There will be a day when everyone will be as good as you, and that is when the psychological part comes in."

In high school, Banderas started out at tight end as a sophomore, but switched to running back his junior and senior season, while continuing to play linebacker defen-

sively.

"I didn't think I grew into my size to play at the next level," Josh said. "Linebacker felt more natural for me. I know on defense, I can make a play at any point."

Banderas made 119 tackles, including 44 solo stops and 11 for a loss his senior season in addition to running for more than 1,200 yards and 18 touchdowns.

Schools like Oregon and USC came after Banderas, but he stood firm with his early commitment to the Huskers.

In fact, Banderas, along with other early commits Johnny Stanton, A.J. Natter and Nathan Gerry, were all instrumental in helping recruit other players to Nebraska.

"We would talk and be like, 'Do you want to hit this guy and talk to him and you hit this guy,'" Josh said.

Banderas would then get on Twitter and reach out to potential players he heard were looking at Nebraska and share some of his stories about the program.

"Being a fan my whole life, I know what Nebraska football is all about," Josh said. "I know there are many people in western Nebraska who will drive six hours to come to a game."

As the signing day got closer, Banderas said he continued to contact players who were on the fence.

"I was not pressuring, but I was getting in their ear and letting them know that they have friends if they come here," Josh said.

When it was all said and done, Banderas joked with the NU coaches that they "should put him on the payroll" for all the work he did promoting the program.

Banderas didn't mind. In fact, he was around the program so much and so familiar with the coaching staff that when Pelini came to his house for his official visit part of the conversation centered around each of their reviews of the movie "Zero Dark Thirty."

With his signing now behind him, Banderas is already looking toward the fall.

He knows Alonzo Whaley, Sean Fisher and Will Compton all graduated from the linebacker position.

"All of the guys with experience are gone," Josh said. "I fully expect to get on the field and maybe start. It's wide open for me to learn the plays and earn a spot."

## 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
INSIDE LB	14
NEBRASKA	2

## HIS TOP 5

# FRESHMEN WHO COULD PLAY FIRST

Head coach Bo Pelini said that he told each and every player he recruited in this class to be ready to play when they get to campus. With that in mind, we look at five players from the 2013 class who could make an immediate impact for Nebraska this fall.

**1. Matt Finnin, OT:** Nebraska was looking for an offensive tackle to come in and provide immediate competition at the position along with Brent Qvale, Jeremiah Sirles and Andrew Rodriguez. Finnin is a mean, physical football player who isn't afraid to play with a little attitude – something that will definitely add to the mix on the offensive line. Finnin turned down late overtures from Florida State and Ohio State, and the fact that he might be able to get a third season of eligibility makes him an intriguing prospect on the line. Look for him to quickly assert himself in Nebraska's offensive tackle rotation.

**2. Randy Gregory, DE:** Perhaps no other Nebraska recruit has better film than Gregory, who missed 2012 with an injury. Another player with three seasons to play, Gregory has the kind of speed and athleticism that will make him an immediate weapon for Pelini and Co. on defense. Quick and athletic with a 7-foot wing span, Gregory can bat down passes, and always seemed to be around the ball in junior college games. Expect him to factor into Nebraska's defensive schemes immediately. Gregory and Thomas Brown both roaring off the edges is a tough look to defend.

**3. Chongo Kondolo, OG, C:** Kondolo is an interesting case for Nebraska. He played tackle at Fresno City College, and Nebraska would like to see him at either guard or center when he arrives on campus. The right guard spot is locked down with Spencer Long, but the left guard spot and center are interesting possibilities for Kondolo. Jake Cotton will be in the mix at that guard spot, and Nebraska needs to decide whether it wants Cole Pensick at center or guard. Kondolo isn't afraid of a little competition. He went to Fresno City College without a scholarship and ended up being one of the more heavily recruited junior college offensive linemen on the West Coast.

**4. Terrell Newby, RB, KR:** Nebraska's running back picture is going to be crowded next year with Ameer Abdullah, Imani Cross, Newby and Adam Taylor. While Newby and Taylor will play if they're able, according to offensive coordinator Tim Beck, Newby has a chance to help Nebraska immediately on special teams. With Abdullah taking over the featured back role, this season, Newby gives Nebraska the flexibility to move him from the kick return units. Newby is an electrifying player, and could be a game-changer on punt or kickoff returns.

**5. D.J. Singleton, SAFETY:** Singleton was a late surprise for Nebraska in December, flipping his commitment to Nebraska from Wisconsin in the wake of Bret Bielema leaving for Arkansas. Singleton's situation is similar to that of Charles Jackson, in that both sat out a season because of academics, are both physically developed, and both will have played in their first seasons on campus. Singleton is different though, because Nebraska needs help at safety. This spring will be huge for Singleton who hasn't played in a game since the Semper Fidelis All-Star game two years ago. If he can learn the defense before fall camp, expect him to be in the mix for more than just special teams duty.





## CETHAN CARTER Tight End

Cethan Carter (pronounced SEE-thun) is one of two players in Nebraska's 2013 recruiting class expected to begin their careers at tight end. The 6-4, 230-pound Carter will join the Husker program after a standout prep career at Rummel High School in Metairie, La. Carter had a breakout season in 2012 for Coach Jay Roth. Carter was a versatile performer, lining up as a tight end, H-Back and fullback in the Raiders' run-based offense. Carter finished the season with 23 receptions for 418 yards and five touchdowns. His play helped Rummel to a perfect 14-0 record and Louisiana Class 5A state championship. Carter shined in the state title game at the Superdome, catching five passes for 74 yards and a touchdown in a 35-14 victory over Barbe High. For his efforts as a senior, Carter was an all-district choice and a honorable-mention all-state selection. Carter also started for Rummel as a junior, and was again used in a variety of roles on offense. Carter chose Nebraska over offers from LSU, Miami, Memphis, Southern Miss, Louisiana Tech, Tulane, Louisiana-Lafayette and Florida International. Carter was ranked as the No. 13 prospect in the state of Louisiana by the New Orleans Times-Picayune, and is ranked among the top 50 tight ends in the country by several recruiting services. Carter is also one of the top players for the Rummel basketball team. Carter is the son of Shelly Carter and he was born on Sept. 5, 1993.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
TIGHT END	10
LOUISIANA	14



## MALIEK COLLINS Defensive Tackle

Maliek Collins is one of two Kansas City products in Nebraska's 2013 recruiting class, and one of six players in the class who are expected to play defensive line for the Huskers. Collins played both ways for Kansas City Center High School and posted huge numbers on defense as a senior. Collins recorded 102 tackles in 2012, including 43 tackles for loss, 15 sacks, five forced fumbles and three fumble recoveries. His play for Coach Bryan DeLong helped Center High to a 10-4 record and a trip to the quarterfinals of the Missouri Class 3A state playoffs, its deepest playoff run since 2004. For his play as a senior, Collins was a first-team Class 3A all-state pick by the Missouri High School Coaches Association. He was also a member of the Kansas City Star's All-Metro first-team defensive unit. Collins was also a standout performer for Center High as a junior in 2011, earning first-team all-conference honors as both an offensive and defensive lineman. Collins was also a standout performer during his junior season. Beyond the football field, Collins is also a standout wrestler for Center High School. Collins reached the quarterfinals at the state meet in the heavyweight class as a junior and posted a 48-5 record. This season, he is the top-ranked heavyweight in his class, and owned a perfect record through the first half of the season. Collins is ranked among the top 20 prospects in the state of Missouri. Collins also visited Kansas and Missouri, and had offers from numerous other schools, including Arkansas, Iowa and Iowa State. Collins was born on April 8, 1995, and is the son of Janice Davis and the late C.W. Collins.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
DEF. TACKLE	58
MISSOURI	11



## TRE'VELL DIXON Wide Receiver

Talented two-way standout Tre'vell Dixon committed to Nebraska in the final weeks before signing day. He then committed to Arizona State before picking Nebraska on signing day. The 6-1, 185 pound Dixon played on both sides of the ball during his career at West Saint Mary High School in Baldwin, La., and he is expected to begin his NU career at receiver. Dixon produced big numbers as a quarterback each of the past two seasons. Dixon's senior season was cut short by injury, but before being sidelined he rushed for 700 yards and passed for another 700, while accounting for better than 20 touchdowns. Dixon also saw time in the defensive backfield. As a junior, Dixon posted big numbers as a quarterback. He rushed for 780 yards and eight touchdowns, while averaging better than 10 yards per carry. Through the air, Dixon completed nearly 60 percent of his passes for 1,700 yards and 14 touchdowns. His play helped West Saint Mary High to a 6-5 record and a trip to the Class 2A state playoffs. Dixon is also a standout on the track at West Saint Mary High where he competes in the 100 and 200 meters. Dixon's versatility on the football field shows in his recruiting rankings. Dixon also visited Houston before picking Nebraska, and had scholarship offers from Texas A&M, Texas Tech, TCU, Arizona State, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado and Minnesota among others. Dixon was born on Feb. 22, 1995, and is the son of Paula Ann Callery.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
ATHLETE	61
LOUISIANA	28





## MATT FINNIN

### Offensive Line

Matt Finnin is one of five offensive line prospects in Nebraska's 2013 signing class and joins the Huskers after spending the 2012 season at the College of DuPage in Illinois. The 6-7, 305-pound Finnin will have two seasons of eligibility with Nebraska. Finnin was a physical presence on the offensive line for Coach Gary Thomas' team in 2012, helping DuPage to a 9-2 record and a victory over Northeastern Oklahoma A&M in the Citizen's Bank Bowl. The 2012 season was Finnin's only season at College of DuPage. Finnin graduated from high school in 2010, and signed with Western Michigan out of high school. He redshirted for the Broncos in 2010, but then returned home the following spring for family reasons. He enrolled at Eastern Illinois in August of 2011, but again left school to return home. At Monee High School in Crete, Ill., Finnin was a member of back-to-back Southland Athletic Conference championship teams in 2008 and 2009. He was named to the Southtown Star's All-Area team as a junior, and to the NWI Times All-Area squad as a senior. Finnin was a member of the Chicago Sun Times' Top 100 and was named to the EdgyTim.com all-state team. Finnin is regarded among the top 15 junior-college offensive tackles. Finnin had a number of offers including Ohio State, Oklahoma, West Virginia, Maryland and Kansas before choosing Nebraska. Finnin was born on Aug. 19, 1991, and he is the son of Gary Finnin and Cathy Norton.

#### 247 Rankings

**JUCO** 171  
**OFF. TACKLE** 15  
**ILLINOIS** 1



## NATHAN GERRY

### Defensive Back

Versatile athlete Nathan Gerry joins the Nebraska program from Washington High School in Sioux Falls, S.D. Gerry is Nebraska's first scholarship signee from South Dakota since 2003 and just the Huskers' third signee from the state since 1997. Gerry's play over the past four seasons helped Washington High and Coach Brian Hermanson to a 48-3 record and three state championships. In 2012, Sioux Falls Washington posted a perfect 12-0 record and outscored its opponents by a combined score of 549-81. Gerry rarely came off the field as a senior. As a safety on defense, he made 64 tackles, including 13.5 tackles for loss and added eight pass breakups, five interceptions and also forced two fumbles. He played running back and receiver on offense and accounted for 1,216 all-purpose yards and 22 touchdowns. Gerry also handled the kicking and punting chores as a senior. Gerry was a first-team Class 11AA all-state selection as a receiver for his play in 2012. Gerry was also a two-way starter during his junior season when Washington posted a 10-3 record and was the state runner-up. Gerry was an All Greater Dakota Conference first-team choice in 2011, and was also selected by the high school coaches in South Dakota as one of the Elite 45 players in the state. In addition to his versatile football talents, Gerry is a top track athlete Gerry is widely regarded as the top prospect in South Dakota. He did not take any other visits after committing to Nebraska last summer, but he also had offers from Iowa, Iowa State, Michigan State, Minnesota and Arizona State. Gerry was born on Feb. 23, 1995, and is the son of Brian and Kelli Gerry.

#### 247 Rankings

**NATIONAL** ---  
**ATHLETE** 87  
**SOUTH DAKOTA** 1



## KEVIN GLADNEY

### Wide Receiver

Wide receiver Kevin Gladney is part of an impressive group of offensive skill position players in Nebraska's 2013 class. The 6-1, 185-pound Gladney is also part of a strong group of signees from the state of Ohio, joining two other Ohio natives in the class. The three signees from Ohio gives Nebraska seven scholarship signees from the state in the past three years. Gladney has posted big receiving numbers each of the past two seasons for Firestone High in Akron, Ohio. As a senior for Coach Tim Flossie, Gladney had 32 receptions for 536 yards and seven touchdowns. He also accounted for 110 yards on three kickoff returns. Gladney's play helped Firestone to a 5-5 record in the Ohio Division II ranks. For his play, Gladney was a second-team Division II All-Ohio choice. Gladney posted even bigger numbers as a junior for Firestone, when he grabbed 48 receptions for 768 yards and 12 touchdowns and earned all-city honors in Akron. Gladney first made a strong impression as a sophomore when he saw extensive action for Firestone. Gladney is also a standout on the basketball court. As a junior, he averaged 19 points per game to help his team to a 15-7 record, to earn all-city honors in basketball. Gladney committed to Nebraska last June, and did not take any other visits, but did have offers from Iowa, Michigan, Michigan State, Purdue, Vanderbilt and Cincinnati to name a few. Gladney is the son of Dorryea Gladney and Kevin Barnett, and he was born on Feb. 13, 1995.

#### 247 Rankings

**NATIONAL** ---  
**WIDE RECEIVER** 168  
**OHIO** 67





## RANDY GREGORY Defensive End

Defensive end Randy Gregory is part of an impressive influx of talent on the Nebraska defensive line in the 2013 class. A product of Arizona Western Community College in Yuma, Ariz., Gregory is one of three junior-college players in the 2013 class. The 6-6, 230-pound Gregory is generally regarded as the nation's top junior-college defensive end prospect and one of the top 10 JUCO prospects regardless of position. Gregory received extensive recruiting attention even though he missed the entire 2012 season because of a broken leg. As a freshman at Arizona Western in 2011, Gregory posted impressive numbers and was named a first-team all-conference defensive end. Gregory had 82 total tackles, including 21 tackles for loss and nine sacks to help Arizona Western to a trip to the NJCAA title game. He also forced three fumbles and recovered two others for Coach Tom Minnick's team. In addition to Nebraska, Gregory also visited Iowa State, and received scholarship offers from dozens of schools including Iowa, UCLA, Missouri, Arkansas, Oregon State, Washington, Illinois and West Virginia. Gregory originally signed with Purdue after a stand-out prep career at Hamilton Southeastern High School in Fishers, Ind. He was ranked as one of the top 15 players in Indiana following his senior season. Gregory also had big numbers as a junior in high school, posting 92 tackles, including 17 sacks. In addition to numerous scholarship offers in football, Gregory also attracted Division I basketball interest out of high school. Gregory was born on Nov. 23, 1992, and he is the son of Ken and Mary Gregory.

### 247 Rankings

JUCO	4
W. DEF. END	1
ARIZONA	1



## ZACH HANNON Offensive Line

Kansas City area product Zach Hannon is one of five players who are expected to begin their Husker careers on the offensive line. The 6-5, 295-pound Hannon joins the NU program following a stand-out career at Rockhurst High School under Coach Tony Severino. Hannon is one of two Kansas City area recruits in the 2013 class, joining Maliek Collins of Kansas City Center High. Hannon was a dominant force on the offensive line as a senior, helping Rockhurst to a 9-3 record and a trip to the third round of the state playoffs. Hannon did not allow a sack on the season and recorded 34 pancake blocks. For his efforts as a senior, Hannon earned first-team Class 6A all-state honors in Missouri and he was a first-team All-Metro pick by the Kansas City Star. Hannon was also a standout on the line for Rockhurst during his junior season when his play helped the school to a 10-2 record and a trip to the Class 6A quarterfinals. Following his senior season, Hannon was chosen to participate in the Semper Fi All-Star Game in Arizona in January. Hannon is regarded as one of the top 10 prospects in the state of Missouri and among the top 50 offensive line prospects in the country. Hannon did not take any official visits beyond Nebraska, but had offers from Arkansas, Colorado, Missouri, Kansas State, Kansas, Northwestern, Iowa State and Illinois to name a few. Hannon was born on Sept. 7, 1994, and he is the son of Timothy and Deborah Hannon.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
OFF. TACKLE	49
MISSOURI	9



## GREG HART Tight End

Ohio product Greg Hart comes to Nebraska after being a standout two-way player for Archbishop Alter High School in Dayton. Hart is one of three prospects from Ohio in Nebraska's 2013 class, giving the Huskers seven signees from the state in the past three years. The 6-5, 225-pound Hart is expected to play tight end at Nebraska after excelling on both offense and defense for Coach Ed Domsitz. Archbishop Alter posted an 8-2-1 record in 2012 and reached the first round of the state playoffs. Hart finished his senior season with better than 20 receptions for approximately 300 yards and three touchdowns. From his defensive end spot, Hart racked up better than 60 tackles, including a league-leading 10 sacks and an interception. He earned conference defensive lineman-of-the-year honors and was an honorable-mention Division III All-Ohio choice. Hart was also a difference-maker on both sides of the ball during his junior season, when he helped Alter to a 10-1 record. The school completed the regular season with a perfect record in 2011, before losing in the first round of the state playoffs. Hart is regarded as one of the top 35 tight end prospects in the country and one of the top 45 overall prospects in the state of Ohio. Hart committed to Nebraska last May and did not take any other official visits. He had a several offers, including Northwestern, Indiana, Pittsburgh, Purdue, Louisville, Kentucky and North Carolina State. Hart is the son of Thomas and Linda Hart, and he was born on Oct. 12, 1994.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
TIGHT END	35
OHIO	44





## DWAYNE JOHNSON

### Offensive Line

Offensive line prospect Dwayne Johnson was one of the final pieces in Nebraska's 2013 signing class. The 6-6, 275-pound Johnson committed to Nebraska in early February and is one of five signees expected to begin their careers on the offensive line. Johnson is one of four Texas natives in the signing class, marking the sixth straight year Nebraska has had at least two signees from the Lone Star State. Johnson helped Bellaire and Coach Trey Sissom reach the Class 5A playoffs in 2012. Johnson's play helped his team to a powerful running attack that averaged 197 yards per game. For his efforts, Johnson was a second-team All-Greater Houston selection on the offensive line, and he earned second-team all-district honors. As a junior, Johnson's powerful blocking helped trigger an explosive Bellaire offense that gained nearly 375 yards per game, including 260 rushing yards per contest. Bellaire had three players rush for better than 700 yards and the team posted a 7-4 record and advanced to the state playoffs. Johnson is regarded as one of the top 60 offensive tackles in the 2013 class according to 247 Sports, and the service also ranks Johnson as one of the top 100 players in Texas. Johnson chose Nebraska over offers from Arkansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Virginia, Washington State and Purdue. He was born on March 24, 1995, and is the son of Dwayne Johnson Sr. and Fatima Brown.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
OFF. TACKLE	43
TEXAS	93



## BOAZ JOSEPH

### Defensive Back

Cornerback Boaz Joseph was one of the final pieces in the 2013 Nebraska signing class, committing to the Huskers in late January. The 6-1, 190-pound Joseph is a versatile defensive back and one of four players in the 2013 class expected to begin their NU careers in the secondary. Joseph is one of three signees from the Florida prep ranks, the most high school players from the Sunshine State to join the NU program in one season. Joseph joins Nebraska after a standout career at Cypress Bay High School in Weston, Fla., one of the top prep programs in Florida. As a senior, Joseph had 52 tackles, 12 pass breakups and four fumble recoveries to help Cypress Bay to a 12-3 record. The school reached the finals of the Class 8A playoffs by winning four straight games by 20 points or more, before dropping a 53-50 decision to Apopka in the state finals. Joseph's play earned him third-team Class 8A all-state honors in 2012, as well as first-team All-Broward County accolades. A physical presence in the defensive backfield, Joseph recorded five interceptions as a junior in 2011, helping Cypress Bay to an 8-4 record and the second round of the state playoffs. Joseph is ranked as one of the top 100 corners in the nation by 247 Sports and is listed among the top 175 prospects in the talent-rich state of Florida. Joseph chose Nebraska after also visiting Louisville, Kentucky, Wisconsin and Purdue, while also receiving offers from Missouri, Minnesota and Pittsburgh among others. Joseph is the son of Jonas and Lisiana Joseph, and he was born on Sept. 8, 1994.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
CORNERBACK	96
FLORIDA	172



## DAVID KNEVEL

### Offensive Line

David Knevel is one of five offensive line prospects in Nebraska's 2013 recruiting class. All five members of the offensive line group stand at least 6-4, with Knevel the tallest of the group at 6-9. A native of Brantford, Ontario, Canada, Knevel is the Huskers' first signee from Canada since defensive tackle Patrick Kabongo joined Nebraska in the 1999 signing class. Knevel was also one of three members of the 2013 class to join the Huskers for the spring semester, joining Courtney Love and D.J. Singleton in enrolling at UNL in January. Knevel was a standout on the offensive line for Coach Ken Chisolm at Pauline Johnson Collegiate High School. Last July, Knevel helped Team Canada to a 23-17 win over Team USA at the International Federation of American Football under-19 tournament in Austin, Texas. Knevel was a member of the Team Ontario West all-star team in 2011 and attended an Under Armour Combine in 2011. Knevel began playing football just four years ago after spending the majority of his youth playing hockey. Knevel is regarded as the top overall prospect in Canada this year and is ranked in the top 250 overall prospects by 247 Sports, which ranks him among the top 20 offensive tackles in the 2013 class. Knevel chose Nebraska over Alabama and West Virginia, and also had scholarship offers from Wisconsin, Purdue, Baylor, Missouri and Vanderbilt to name a few. Knevel is the son of Michelle Knevel and Mark Miller, and he was born on Oct. 18, 1994.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	231
OFF. TACKLE	18
CANADA	1





## CHONGO KONDOLO Offensive Line

Chongo Kondolo is one of two junior college offensive line prospects in Nebraska's 2013 recruiting class, along with Matt Finnin. The 6-4, 290-pound Kondolo has been a standout offensive tackle at Fresno City College over the past two seasons. Kondolo will have three years to complete two seasons of eligibility at Nebraska. Kondolo helped Coach Tony Caviglia's team rank among the top squads in the California junior-college ranks each of the past two seasons. In 2012, Fresno City College posted an 8-3 record behind a strong offense that averaged more than 30 points per game. Kondolo was a first-team All-America choice by the California Community College Coaches Association, and earned first-team Valley all-conference honors. Kondolo was also a key performer in 2011, when Fresno went 10-0 in the regular season, before losing in the Northern California Football Association Championship Game. Kondolo went to Fresno City College after a standout prep career at Creekview High School in Carrollton, Texas, where he played for Coach Kyle Geller. He is ranked among the top 30 junior college players in California and is listed as the sixth-best offensive tackle prospect by 247 Sports. Kondolo also visited BYU, Illinois, Tennessee and Utah State, and had offers from Florida State and Texas Tech. He was born on Aug. 9, 1993 and is the son of Hazel Muntemba.

### 247 Rankings

JUCO	104
OFF. TACKLE	6
TEXAS	31



## COURTNEY LOVE Linebacker

A two-time All-Ohio selection, linebacker Courtney Love is part of an impressive group of signees in the 2013 class from Ohio. Love is one of three scholarship recruits from Ohio, the most signees Nebraska has ever had from the state. The 6-1, 225-pound Love is also one of three talented linebackers in NU's 2013 class. Love was one of the first players to commit to Nebraska's 2013 class, announcing his intention in late April. Love posted impressive numbers for Coach P.J. Fecko as a senior, registering 110 tackles, 19 tackles for loss and nine sacks. He also forced four fumbles and had two pass break-ups, despite missing one game because of injury. Love was honored for his efforts as a first-team Division III All-Ohio selection for the second straight year. During his junior season, Love played a key role in Cardinal Mooney winning the Division III state title. Love recorded 130 tackles, including seven sacks, two forced fumbles and a fumble recovery. In the state title game victory over Springfield Shawnee, Love was Mooney's leading tackler. His play for the Cardinals in 2011 earned Love first-team All-Ohio honors and Division III co-defensive Player-of-the-Year recognition. Love is regarded as one of the nation's top 30 linebackers by multiple recruiting services and is listed among the top 30 overall prospects in the state of Ohio. Love chose Nebraska over dozens of offers from around the country, including Florida State, Ohio State, USC, Oklahoma, Notre Dame, Michigan State, Illinois and Indiana to name a few. Love was born on Sept. 28, 1994, and he is the son of Faye Madison and Cory Love.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
O. LINEBACKER	23
OHIO	19



## DRAKE MARTINEZ Defensive Back

Drake Martinez joins the class after starting as a versatile two-way performer at Laguna Beach High School in California. The younger brother of Nebraska senior quarterback Taylor Martinez, Drake is one of three Californians in the Huskers' 2013 class, joining offensive standouts Johnny Stanton and Terrell Newby. During his senior season in 2012, Martinez rushed for 1,613 yards and 23 touchdowns, while averaging 9.4 yards per carry from his running back position. The 6-2, 200-pound Martinez counted a 95-yard touchdown run among his many rushing highlights. Martinez also caught six passes for 122 yards, with each of those catches resulting in a touchdown. On defense, he made 130 tackles and had four interceptions, returning those picks for 154 yards, including two touchdowns. Martinez also averaged 49.6 yards on kickoff returns and 57.0 yards on two punt returns. His play helped Coach Michael Churchill's team to an 11-1-1 record, an Orange Coast League title and a trip to the CIF-SS semifinals for a second straight year. Martinez was named the MVP of the Orange Coast League. Martinez posted equally impressive numbers during his junior season, helping his team to a 10-3 record. He rushed for 1,889 yards and 27 touchdowns, while catching 12 passes for 285 yards and two touchdowns. Defensively, he added five interceptions, including a 62-yard return for a score. Martinez also saw varsity action during his sophomore season in 2010. Martinez also visited Michigan State, and also had offers from Vanderbilt and San Diego State. He was born on Feb. 11, 1994, and is the son of Casey and Epifania Martinez.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
O. LINEBACKER	92
CALIFORNIA	138





## KEVIN MAURICE

### Defensive Tackle

Defensive tackle prospect Kevin Maurice is one of six players in the Huskers' 2013 recruiting class who are expected to begin their career on the defensive line. The 6-3, 270-pound Maurice is one of three players from the state of Florida in Nebraska's 2013 signing class. The three signees from the Sunshine State ties for the most NU has signed from Florida and represents the largest number of signees from the Florida high school ranks in a single year. Maurice is regarded as one of the fastest-rising prospects in the state after a standout senior season at Freedom High School in Orlando. Maurice recorded approximately 70 tackles, including nine sacks and better than 20 tackles for loss, while also forcing two fumbles. His play helped Coach Andy Johnson's team to a 7-4 season and a trip to the Class 8A state playoffs. Maurice earned first-team Class 8A all-state honors from the Orlando Sentinel and was an all-district and All-Metro selection. He was also selected to play in the Central Florida All-Star game. Maurice played on both sides of the ball as a junior for Freedom High. He had 50 pancake blocks as an offensive lineman, and totaled 50 tackles and six sacks on defense. Maurice also started as a sophomore in 2010, for a Freedom High team that finished with an 8-2 record. Maurice is regarded as one of the top 120 defensive tackles in the nation by several recruiting services. He also visited Boston College, and chose the Huskers over BC, Florida Atlantic, North Carolina State and Memphis. Maurice is the son of Hernise Maurice, and he was born on July 19, 1994.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
DEF. TACKLE	75
FLORIDA	186



## GABE MILLER

### Long Snapper

Gabe Miller joins the Nebraska program as a long snapper who is generally regarded as one of the top specialists in the country. The 6-0, 235-pound Miller has been a key contributor for Penn High School in Mishawaka, Ind. for the past three seasons. In 2012, Miller helped Coach Cory Yeoman's team to a 9-2 record and a trip to the second round of the Class 5A (largest class) playoffs in Indiana. Miller was the team's starting center and handled the long snapping chores. For his role in Penn's success, Miller was a first-team 5A all-state selection by the Indiana Football Coaches Association. Miller also earned Academic All-State honors in 2012. Miller was the starting center and long snapper as a junior in 2011, when Penn High went 14-1 and reached the Class 5A state finals. He served as the starting long snapper and the backup center during his sophomore season when Penn High reached the state playoffs and finished with an 8-5 record. Miller also competes in track for Penn High School. Miller graded out as one of the nation's top three long snappers at the Rubio Long Snapping Camp. He is also regarded as one of the top three long snappers in the country by several recruiting outlets, and one of the top 40 overall prospects in Indiana. Miller was born on Sept. 27, 1994, and is the son of Douglas and Steffany Miller.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
LONG SNAPPER	3
INDIANA	34



## DIMARYA MIXON

### Defensive End

Dimarya Mixon is part of an impressive group of defensive line prospects in the Huskers' 2013 recruiting class. Mixon joins the Nebraska program from the Texas high school ranks where he was a standout at West Mesquite High School. Mixon is one of four Texas natives in Nebraska's signing class, marking the sixth straight year NU has signed at least two players from the Lone Star State. Mixon recorded 48 tackles during his senior season, including 12 tackles for loss and a pair of sacks. He also added 11 quarterback hurries to help Coach Mike Overton's team to an 8-3 record and a trip to the Class 4A state playoffs. For his play as a senior, Mixon was a first-team all-district selection. Mixon also had a productive junior season to help West Mesquite High to the state playoffs. He recorded 35 tackles, with three tackles for loss and a fumble recovery, while pressuring opposing quarterbacks 11 times. Mixon is listed among the top 40 defensive tackle prospects and as one of the top 70 players in Texas by 247 Sports. Mixon also had offers from Missouri, Oklahoma, Arizona State, Mississippi and West Virginia among others. He was born on March 10, 1995, and is the son of Tasha Mixon.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
DEF. TACKLE	37
TEXAS	67





## A.J. NATTER Defensive End

The fourth visit did the trick for Natter when he came for the 2012 Spring game. Natter is NU's first signee from the state of Wisconsin since 1997. Natter was a three-year standout on the defensive line for Jeff Bachinski at Milton High School. As a senior, Natter had 43 tackles, including 11 tackles for loss, and 4.5 sacks, while also recording two fumbles in eight games. His play as a senior earned Natter first-team all-state honors from the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association, while he was a second-team all-state pick by the Associated Press. In his junior season, Natter had 80 tackles, including 21 tackles for loss and eight sacks, while also blocking two kicks. His play in 2011 earned Natter honorable-mention all-state accolades from the WFCAs, and Natter also picked up all-region and all-conference honors. In 2010, Natter started as a sophomore and helped Milton High to a 7-4 record and a trip to the state playoffs. Natter earned second-team all-conference honors after making 55 tackles and recording 10 sacks. Natter was one of the first commitments in Nebraska's 2013 class, pledging his intention last April. He did not take any other visits, but had offers from Iowa, Michigan State, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Purdue among others. Natter was born on Oct. 8, 1994, and is the son of David and Beth Natter.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
W. DEF. END	18
WISCONSIN	3



## MARCUS NEWBY Linebacker

Marcus Newby comes to Nebraska after being a dominant defensive presence for Coach Dave Mencarini at Quince Orchard (Md.) High School the past three seasons. Newby is the first NU signee from Maryland since fellow Quince Orchard product Jason Ankrah joined the NU program in the 2009 class. Overall, Newby is just the third Maryland product to sign with the Huskers since 1990. As a senior, the 6-1, 210-pound Newby recorded a team-high 132 tackles, while adding more than 15 tackles for loss, seven pass breakups, an interception, two forced fumbles and a pair of blocked kicks. Newby's play helped Quince Orchard to a 12-2 record and a second consecutive Class 4A state runner-up finish. For his work in 2012, Newby earned consensus all-state honors in Maryland for the second straight year. He was also a Washington Post All-Met first-team choice, and a Montgomery Gazette first-team pick. Newby was also a difference-maker for the Quince Orchard defense during a 13-1 campaign in 2011. Newby racked up 107 tackles, 17 tackles for loss and three sacks as a junior, while also adding eight pass breakups and two fumble recoveries. Newby broke into the varsity starting lineup as a sophomore in 2010 and earned first-team all-county honors after helping his team to a 9-3 record. Newby was selected to play in the Semper Fi All-American Bowl in Arizona in January. Newby had offers from dozens of schools, including Oklahoma, Penn State, South Carolina, Virginia Tech, Arizona and Maryland. Newby is the son of Mary Lourdes and Kenneth Newby, and he was born on July 7, 1994.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	144
O. LINEBACKER	11
MARYLAND	6



## TERRELL NEWBY Running Back

Running back Terrell Newby is regarded as one of the most explosive offensive playmakers in the nation in the 2013 class. The 5-10, 180-pound Newby posted back-to-back seasons with more than 2,000 yards rushing for Chaminade High in West Hills, Calif. Newby is one of three Californians in the class, marking the 15th straight year NU has had at least one signee from California. In his career, Newby accounted for 105 total touchdowns for Coach Ed Croson's team. As a senior in 2012, Newby ran for 2,305 yards and 45 touchdowns, and averaged 7.7 yards per carry. Newby also caught 18 passes for 176 yards and helped Chaminade to a 12-2 record and a trip to the finals of the CIF Southern Section playoffs. Newby's top game in 2012 came against Harvard-Westlake, when he rushed for 360 yards and eight touchdowns in a 78-34 victory. For his efforts as a senior, Newby was a finalist for the Cal/Hi Sports Mr. Football Award and was named to the Los Angeles Times' high school football All-Star team. Newby also topped 2,000 yards as a junior in 2011, running for 2,117 yards and 34 rushing touchdowns on 303 attempts. Newby first made a splash as a sophomore when he rushed for 1,372 yards and 18 touchdowns for Chaminade, helping his team to an 11-2 record and a playoff semifinal appearance. He chose Nebraska over UCLA, Oregon, California and Washington, and had offers from dozens of other schools. He is the son of Terrell and Lorraine Newby and he was born on July 25, 1995.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	139
RUNNING BACK	11
CALIFORNIA	18





## D.J. SINGLETON

### Defensive Back

New Jersey product D.J. Singleton is one of four players in Nebraska's 2013 signing class who are expected to begin their careers in the secondary. The 6-1, 195-pound Singleton is also one of three recruits who enrolled at Nebraska in January, joining offensive lineman David Knevel and linebacker Courtney Love. Singleton originally signed with Wisconsin last February, but did not enroll at the school and re-opened his recruitment this winter. Singleton graduated from St. Peter's Prep in Jersey City, N.J., in 2012 and was one of the top defensive prospects in the Garden State. As a senior, Singleton posted 53 tackles, four sacks, 12 tackles for loss and three forced fumbles for Coach Rich Hansen. His play earned him second-team All-New Jersey selection by the Newark Star-Ledger, as well as all-metro and all-county honors. As a junior, Singleton made 40 tackles, including three sacks and forced three fumbles. His play earned him all-county honors in 2010. He first saw varsity action as a sophomore in 2009, and made 43 tackles. Singleton played in the Semper Fi All-Star game in January of 2012 and was selected to the USA Today International Bowl. Singleton was also a two-year letterwinner in track and field at St. Peter's Prep. Singleton chose Nebraska over Wisconsin and Rutgers. A year ago, he had scholarship offers from dozens of schools, including Michigan, Michigan State and Illinois to name a few. Singleton was born on Jan. 7, 1994, and he is the son of Dwayne Sr. and Bernadette Singleton.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
SAFETY	52
NEW JERSEY	22



## JOHNNY STANTON

### Quarterback

Talented dual-threat quarterback Johnny Stanton is one of three California prep standouts in NU's 2013 signing class, joining running back Terrell Newby and defensive back Drake Martinez. The 6-2, 220-pound Stanton showed the ability to be a game-changing quarterback both as a passer and runner for Coach Harry Welch at Santa Margarita Catholic High School. Stanton's senior season was cut short by a knee injury in week five, but before he was injured Stanton helped his team to a consensus ranking among the nation's top five prep teams. In his shortened season, Stanton completed 59-of-88 passes for 949 yards and 12 touchdowns, while rushing for 386 yards and 10 touchdowns on just 47 carries. Santa Margarita was 5-0 at the time of Stanton's injury and went on to finish with a 9-3 record. Stanton was one of California's most dynamic offensive players in the 2011 season, helping Santa Margarita to a 13-2 record and the CIF Southern Section Division I state title. Stanton completed better than 60 percent of his passes for 2,439 yards and 13 touchdowns, while rushing for 1,428 yards and 21 touchdowns. As a sophomore in 2010, Stanton started at safety for the Santa Margarita defense and also logged time at quarterback. Stanton made 72 tackles on defense, while posting 375 passing yards and 223 rushing yards. Stanton committed to Nebraska last summer and did not take any other visits, but had offers from California, Oregon, Oregon State, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin among others. Stanton is the son of John III and Lori Stanton, and he was born on Sept. 7, 1994.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
QUARTERBACK	9
CALIFORNIA	35



## ERNEST SUTTLES

### Defensive End

Florida product Ernest Suttles is one of six players in Nebraska's 2013 signing class who are expected to start their careers on the defensive line. Suttles is also one of three signees from the Florida prep ranks, matching the largest group of scholarship signees Nebraska has ever had from the Sunshine State. The 6-5, 240-pound Suttles was a dominant defensive force for Gaither High School in Tampa over the past two seasons. As a senior for Coach Jason Stokes' team, Suttles recorded 88 total tackles, including 55 solo stops. He made an impressive 31 tackles for loss, including 12 sacks and added four fumbles caused, a fumble recovery and two blocked field goals. His play helped Gaither High to the Class 7A district 7 title and an 8-3 record, before losing in the first round of the playoffs. Suttles earned third-team Class 7A all-state honors for his efforts in 2012. Suttles was also a dominant force on the defensive front during his junior year in helping Gaither to a 9-4 record and a trip to the regional final round of the 7A state playoffs. Suttles had 80 total tackles, including 37 solo stops, with five sacks, 12 tackles for loss and a fumble recovery. Suttles is regarded among the top 25 weakside defensive ends in the nation by 247 Sports, which also ranks him among the top 80 overall prospects in the state of Florida. Suttles chose Nebraska after also visiting Iowa State. He also had scholarship offers from Tennessee, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, South Florida and West Virginia among others. Suttles was born on Feb. 14, 1994, and he is the son of Ernestine Brower and the late George Suttles.

#### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL	---
W. DEF. END	24
FLORIDA	77





## ADAM TAYLOR Running Back

Texas native Adam Taylor is one of two dynamic running backs in Nebraska's 2013 signing class, joining California product Terrell Newby. Taylor is one of four native Texans in Nebraska's recruiting class. Taylor posted prolific rushing numbers during his prep career at Katy High School in the Houston area, and helped the school to a Class 5A state title in 2012. The 6-2, 200-pound Taylor ran for 2,754 yards and 45 touchdowns in his senior season, leading Coach Gary Joseph's team to a perfect 16-0 record and Class 5A Division 2 state title. Taylor was at his best in the state title run, first rushing 40 times for 226 yards in the state semifinals against Cibolo Steele. In the state title victory over Cedar Hill at Cowboys Stadium, Taylor ran 30 times for 276 yards and five touchdowns. For his play in 2012, Taylor was named the Houston Chronicle's Greater Houston Offensive Player of the Year, and was the Old-Coach.com Class 5A State MVP. Taylor missed nearly all of his junior year because of injury, rushing just 20 times for 106 yards before being sent to the sidelines. Taylor first showed his ability for Katy High School as a sophomore in 2010, helping the team to a 13-1 record and trip to the state quarterfinals. Taylor was the District 19-5A Newcomer of the Year after rushing for 1,553 yards and 18 touchdowns, ranked among the top 45 prospects overall in the state of Texas. Taylor had dozens of offers before choosing Nebraska, including Alabama, Arkansas, Baylor, Florida State, Kansas State, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Stanford and Wisconsin. Taylor is the son of Barry and Fedora Taylor, and he was born on July 19, 1995.

### 247 Rankings

NATIONAL ---  
RUNNING BACK 24  
TEXAS 51

## 247Sports National Analysis of Nebraska's Class

With Signing Day finally in the books, Huskers Illustrated assembled a brain trust of national 247Sports recruiting analysts to breakdown Nebraska's class and how the Huskers got better in 2013.

### Overall impressions of Nebraska's 2013 class?

**Gerry Hamilton, National Scouting**

**Director:** "I really like Nebraska's class. I really like the linebacker class, the offensive line, the defensive line class. I really like the class overall, but I would be remiss if I didn't mention the running back position. Terrell Newby and Adam Taylor. The thing about those guys are they're different backs. Taylor is a Big Ten grinder and will maximize runs. Newby is a big-play guy."

**JC Shurburt, National Recruiting**

**Director:** "I think it's rebounded pretty well after the defection of Marcus McWilson to Kentucky slowed it a little bit, but right now Nebraska is third in the Big Ten and I really like what they've done at linebacker, the line of scrimmage and at running back. Those running backs can do some good things. Johnny Stanton can really give them a good quarterback to build around. I like Marcus Newby and Josh Banderas a lot as linebackers. Good length on defense with A.J. Natter and Ernest Suttles. Look what they're bringing on the line. Nebraska is a line of scrimmage program and I think they definitely filled needs, maybe as well as any team in the country."

**Barton Simmons, National Recruiting**

**Analyst:** "The thing that really jumps out to me is that it's a blue collar class. The players coming in are really gritty, tough, physical players. Whether that's Johnny Stanton at quarterback, Terrell Newby and Adam Taylor at running back, a tight end like Cethan Carter. Up and down the list, and even if they're not the highly rated guys, they have a workman-like mentality on the football field. I think that's certainly in line with what Nebraska has tried to build its program around."

**Steve Wiltfong, National Recruiting**

**Reporter:** "I think Nebraska has a lot of difference makers when you look at it. Taking it from the top, Randy Greg-

ory has the tools to be a very high draft pick. He's going to come in and make noise. I love both Newbys. You've got Marcus at linebacker and Terrell at running back. Nebraska got a lot better in the front seven with Gregory, Newby, Josh Banderas, Courtney Love. Johnny Stanton is going to be a good one too. David Knevel is an intriguing guy. You could be talking about a Bryant McKinnie right there. I think this is a really good class, but it's easy to say great things about it when you're talking about a Top 20 class."

### Which two guys you would stake your name to?

**Hamilton:** "Randy Gregory. He broke his leg last year, but if he returns from that, he's a difference maker off the edge. A lot of big schools came in, but if he hadn't broken his leg and missed the season, almost everybody would have come in and offered him. He's a difference-maker from day one. I would go long-term potential with David Knevel. The upside is huge on him. He's going to develop and be a multi-year starter on offensive line. A guy that size, who can move. Coming in early gives him a jumpstart to his future. I like him as a multi-year starter at either right or left tackle."

**Shurburt:** "I think Randy Gregory and Marcus Newby are two guys to look out for. Newby is one of the best players to ever come out of his high school program. Not a huge linebacker, but he can hit. High character guy that is going to work hard. Gregory is a defensive end that Purdue is probably kicking itself for letting get away. Nebraska did a good job of getting out to Arizona to see him. He was hurt, but passed the eyeball test. I think Gregory will almost immediately help if healthy."

**Simmons:** "I'd go with Johnny Stanton. He's going to need to get healthy and assuming he gets back from that, you have to love the intangibles he brings. That's the toughest thing to evaluate, but that's what he's got and that's the sure thing with him. Add how he's been able to develop as a passer and he's going to be a kid Nebraska fans love. I'd go with Josh Banderas. Local kid. Knows what the program is





From left: Greg Hart, Courtney Love and Josh Banderas visit Memorial Stadium for the Wisconsin Game.

about, but at the same time is athletic and the type of player who is going to have a really productive career at Nebraska."

**Wiltfong:** "Randy Gregory is the jewel of the class. Terrell Newby has a chance to be big time for them."

#### *Which position group got improved the most in the 2013 class?*

**Hamilton:** "I'd say linebacker, but running back is really good too. I think it's 1A and 1B. It's hard to go against running backs, but the linebacker group has three, four-star prospects. I like the group they have. Even a guy like D.J. Singleton, who knows where his body goes. He starts out at safety, but could add 20 pounds and play linebacker. When you look at Marcus Newby, Banderas and Courtney Love, I think you're going to get two multi-year starters out of that group."

**Shurburt:** "I'd say offensive line. I really like the linebackers but I think it's the offensive line for Nebraska. David Knevel is a great find by the Huskers. You look down that list with Dwayne Johnson, Zach Hannon, Chongo Kondolo and Matt Finnin, you've got a nice mix of impact JUCOs and high school players. You can throw those guys into the development cycle and those guys can help Nebraska in different stages. That's important. That's your core right there. It's important to get good players there and Nebraska has certainly done that."

**Simmons:** "The linebacker group. They

have Courtney Love in there, Marcus Newby, Josh Banderas. Those are all guys that you have to think you have a chance to be pretty successful. When a sleeper who could maybe play linebacker is Drake Martinez, that's a group that you have to think a star emerges from, if not several.

**Wiltfong:** "I like to lump the front seven together in football. I think that's where football is won. Look at the sheer numbers. It was obviously a priority for coach Pelini and his staff. They upgraded the whole front seven. I think it's apparent they thought they had a need across the front and the linebacker position. They went out and addressed it. The Huskers have some guys with length. I love the 6-foot-5 guys, you know like Randy Gregory, A.J. Natter, Ernest Suttles. They are going to have a massive defensive line if those guys come together."

#### *Who is the biggest sleeper in this class?*

**Hamilton:** "Cethan Carter. He's a guy who was a senior riser in Louisiana. LSU flirted with him. I think you take a kid like that who has flown under the radar. He's a player who has really improved. If I had to mention another one, I'd say Dwayne Johnson."

**Simmons:** "I'd say Boaz Joseph. He has size. He is an athlete. I think as his body develops, he just has the look of a kid who is going to be a physical presence on

the outside at cornerback. It may not be as a freshman or as a redshirt freshman, but as he gets into the strength and conditioning program and gets more polished, I think people will look back and say he was a big get out of south Florida."

**Shurburt:** "I look at Kevin Gladney. He's a player I saw at the Under Armour combine last year and he impressed me there. I like the film and he kind of slipped under the radar. He's got good hands. I really like him a lot. I think he'll be a good player for the Huskers and a player that you hear about a bunch. I also really like Boaz Joseph, a Cypress Bay kid. He's slipped through the cracks but in late evaluations he's one to definitely watch. He's 6-1, 185 at corner. That's a player that can definitely step in and play and contribute at that spot. If not that he can step in and play safety."

**Wiltfong:** "Matt Finnin is a guy that really blew up. He's out of Crete-Monee High School and they've produced some blue chippers lately and the coach told me that if they would have known what they know now about recruiting, Finnin would have been a blue chipper coming out of high school. They are not surprised that he's got all the offers he's received in college. Greg Hart is a 6-foot-5, 220-pound tight end. That was a position of need for Nebraska in this class and they went out and got some with Cethan Carter. He sounds like he'll have an opportunity to play early."



## STATE OF THE HUSKERS

# Redshirts from Class of 2012, early enrollees to figure into spring mix

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

With Signing Day finished and all 26 recruits accounted for, Nebraska's coaches can turn their attention to what will surely be one of the more interesting spring practices of the past few years.

A cursory view of Nebraska's roster reveals the following: the Huskers have a lot of firepower coming back on offense, and will begin the spring with the potential to be an extremely prolific offense. It also reveals that Nebraska's defense is going to be full of competition at nearly every spot as the Huskers replace a number of graduating starters.

At his Signing Day press conference, Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini said that Nebraska might have been a bit hasty to decide to redshirt some players from the 2012 class, and that Nebraska will be more willing to play younger players. As Pelini put it, Nebraska is going to "fire its guns."

"That's going to be our mindset," Pelini said. "We're going to get each of these kids ready to play. We're going to try to use every ounce of depth we have and like I said, our mindset, like it always is to go win them all. There are a number of these young guys who can be a big part of that...I look back and think maybe the one mistake I did make is that I didn't play some of these kids more. That I did redshirt kids. I made that decision a little too quick. I kick myself for it. You live and learn. Like I said, you think back and evaluate, and sometime you have to learn from your mistakes too."

Those players that did redshirt last season, will be among the leaders in the clubhouse to take over a number of key starting spots.

The position battles taking place on defense this spring will be particularly interesting given the young players in a position to win them. Among the players to watch this spring:

**Vincent Valentine:** The 6-foot-3, 320-pound defensive tackle has the size to be an immediate contributor in the fall for Nebraska. The Huskers signed four defensive linemen, and will add six more to the mix in the summer, so the cupboard is going to be plenty stocked. Aaron Curry and Avery Moss played as true freshmen last season, but Valentine is intriguing because of his size and ability to fill the middle. He earned rave reviews from coaches on the scout team for being unblockable at times and giving Nebraska's offensive line fits. With Chase Rome no longer in the program, and Thad Randle still battling knee issues this spring, Valentine needs to show he's ready to seize the day.

**Zaire Anderson:** Anderson showed flashes of what he



**"We're going to get each of these kids ready to play. We're going to use every ounce of depth we have, and like I said, our mindset, like it always is to win them all. There are a number of these young guys who can be a big part of that."**

can do on the field early last year before injuring his knee. In fact, he had actually injured his knee and didn't even know it, making plays sideline-to-sideline on a bad wheel. He participated in winter conditioning and will be back this spring where Nebraska has a big hole to fill. The Huskers lost three starters at the position from a season ago, and the battle among David Santos, Michael Rose, Courtney Love, Thomas Brown, Jared Afalava and others will be one of the more intriguing storylines of the spring. Two more talented linebackers in Josh Banderas and Marcus Newby will join the fray in the summer.

**D.J. Singleton:** Nebraska lost three starting safeties from a season ago, and have no clear answers to earn the starting job there. Enter Singleton, who enrolled at Nebraska at the semester after sitting out a season while he waited to qualify academically. He's advanced physically, and was among the top safety recruits in the country as part of the 2012 class. He has the kind of physicality to be an immediate contributor, but much of his success will come down to how well he can learn Nebraska's defense.

**N**

*Read daily Husker reports from Michael Bruntz at [HuskersIllustrated.com](http://HuskersIllustrated.com).*

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# NU steps away from being settling school

BY GRANT MUESSEL

**N**ebraska's 2013 recruiting class was more than Nebraska's highest-ranked class under Bo Pelini by most standards. It marked a big step away from "settling school" status.

What, pray tell, is a settling school?

It's a little term I invented to describe a college team that's the best available option to a high school senior who's been recruited to play Division I college football. Settling schools are who are the best choice, not the toughest choice.

Usually, a Midwest kid will settle for an offer from Purdue if his other scholarship offers come from Bowling Green, South Dakota State and Toledo. Most football players on the west coast will sign the dotted line for San Jose State if the only other offer he holds came from Cal Poly. Georgia might be the toughest choice when a Florida native is torn between Florida State, Miami and LSU. Choosing between Texas, Oklahoma and Texas A&M is a tough choice.

Nebraska is slowly starting to move away from the class of settling school under Bo Pelini and his latest staffers: Terry Joseph, Rich Fisher and Ross Els. They're driving Nebraska away from the ranks of a school that's fighting recruiting battle with mid majors-caliber football teams.

It's not hard to settle on Nebraska when your other options are Iowa State, Akron and Western Michigan. There's a free issue of *Huskers Illustrated* on yours truly for anyone who can tell me where Western Michigan University is located, without the help of Google.

Nebraska needs to become a tough choice, not the best choice. The Huskers have to compete with Michigan and Ohio State for Rust Belt recruits. Until Nebraska can beat Oregon and USC for California with an inkling of consistency, it won't compete consistently with Michigan, Ohio State and Oregon.

Nebraska hasn't knocked out any recruiting heavyweights like Ohio State and Alabama completely yet, but it landed some hard blows on national signing day.

By the standards of our recruiting gurus at Huskers Illustrated with 247Sports, Nebraska hauled in eight 4-star recruits in David Knevel, Courtney Love, Randy Gregory, Terrell Newby, Adam Taylor, Marcus Newby, Josh Banderas and Johnny Stanton.

Towering David Knevel, the pride of Ontario high school football was a magnificent pick for Nebraska...a 6'9" 300 pounder who plays offensive tackle. Bo Pelini and Co. beat out Alabama for Knevel's commitment. His commitment to Nebraska is the kind of recruiting victory Nebraska needs to churn out top recruit-

**Nebraska needs to become a tough choice, not the best choice. The Huskers have to compete with Michigan and Ohio State for Rust Belt recruits. Until Nebraska can beat Oregon and USC for California with an inkling of consistency, it won't compete consistently with Michigan, Ohio State and Oregon.**

ing classes.

Terrell Newby might have been the best tailback in California in 2012, and Nebraska beat out the likes of UCLA to get him on board. Not even Oregon had enough speed to chase down a commitment from this C.J. Spiller reincarnate.

Running back Adam Taylor might be an even better prospect out of Texas. Nebraska gained his commitment over eight schools that have competed in BCS bowl games within the last two seasons. I asked Tim Beck how Taylor's going to fit into the offense.

"He'll be Rex Burkhead."

An OK comparison, I suppose.

Els and John Papuchis snagged linebacker (and soon to be fan favorite on merit of his name alone) Courtney Love out the Buckeye's backyard, which also happens to be Bo Pelini's hometown of

Youngstown, Ohio. The grungy tackler received scholarship offers to play for Notre Dame, Oklahoma and USC among more than a dozen others.

If not for defensive end Randy Gregory's limited eligibility coming out of junior college, he'd likely be sought after by any team on the West Coast with championship hopes. Even still, he garnered attention from UCLA, Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas before signing a letter of intent with Nebraska.

Papuchis went to his old Maryland stomping grounds to pluck linebacker Marcus Newby out of Quince Orchard, despite Newby being courted by Virginia Tech, South Carolina, Oklahoma and everyone who's anyone on the East Coast.

Josh Banderas? Well, his recruitment was probably never a fair fight. The U.S. Army All-American and Lincoln native became a second generation Husker on signing day. He took a visit to Ohio State (probably just for experiences' sake) but spurned the Buckeyes and Oregon to play for Nebraska.

And lest we forget, Johnny Stanton — the West Coast gunslinger QB with Broadway Joe Namath's East Coast smile and friendly Midwest demeanor. Just wait until you see him on your local news, or until he sees the field.

And those are just the 4-star guys.

Tight end Cethan Carter turned down a grayshirt offer from LSU in his home state. He'll compete immediately with the losses of Ben Cotton and Kyler Reed.

The Huskers held off Florida State for offensive tackle Matt Finnin, who also held an offer from Oklahoma. Basically all the Stoops boys wanted this kid.

Sure, the 2013 class signed a handful of guys that chose Nebraska over Iowa State or Toledo, but not even Nick Saban signs a class of all 4- and 5-star guys every year. Some years maybe, but not every year.

"We get the kids we want," Pelini said on National Signing Day.

While it may not be entirely true for all 25 signees, the statement is getting closer and closer to the hopeful truth.

Nebraska's stepping out of its role as a settling school.





## RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER  
RECRUITING EDITOR,  
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

# Nebraska to change recruiting methods

*All programs will be affected by new NCAA rules that open up the recruiting process.*

Husker assistant Ross Els finished up his first class since being named Nebraska recruiting coordinator. It could also be his last class, thanks to a set of rules passed by the NCAA surrounding recruiting regulations that begin on August 1.

New rules allow for Nebraska to hire a full-time recruiting coordinator, an individual that doesn't necessarily have to be a coach. Els, who coaches linebackers, said no decisions have been made but preliminary discussions have been had.

"It all starts with now that you don't have to have a full-time coach as the recruiting coordinator, who is that person going to be?" Els asked. "How many people are you going to need for recruiting only responsibilities?"

Els didn't speculate too much either way.

"There's good and bad doing it both ways," Els said. "I certainly enjoy doing it but if that's not what is best for us then we aren't going to do it that way."

"I can see it being good that a full-time coach is kind of overseeing it a little bit. Now he can help direct the rest of the staff, but I can also see all of us full-time coaches worry about coaching and getting out on the road. There were times where I had trouble getting out on the road

because there were times I wanted to make sure things were getting done better at the office."

The third-year coach clearly enjoys his role as recruiting coordinator. Els had a nice 2013 cycle – implementing Big Red Weekend, organizing a select junior day and he kept things running smoothly on the trail – but ultimately he's a coach and he values his time with the linebackers.

Regardless of how Nebraska tackles the coordinator situation, recruiting is going to change in a big way. The current set up features a small support staff of several individuals, who do everything from book coaches travel, to setting up meetings with schools, to checking on caterers for recruiting events. These individuals drive recruits to and from the airport, lead campus tours, create highlight tapes and offer names to the staff to potentially evaluate.

Els said with the changes he'd expect that area of the support staff to grow in order to meet the demand of the new recruiting changes. Recruiting staffers will have free reign to text, tweet, Facebook and call recruits on behalf of the program.

"Bo and Shawn (Eichorst) are going to sit down and try to figure out the best way to get this thing done," Els said.

"There are so many different directions we can go. We have a list of responsibilities and duties that we know we want done. We just have to plug the right people in for that."

Nebraska will look at several different positions and types of people to fill those spots.

"It's going to be everybody," Els said. "You need marketers in there, people that can really advertise your program. You need people that can identify and evaluate recruits. In the past only full-time coaches and graduate assistants could evaluate recruits. You need guys that know football. You need guys that can communicate with kids because they are going to be calling and texting. You need secretarial help because there's a lot of detail that goes through with recruiting, with compliance and everything. You need a lot of different types of people."

"If you're expected to win a national title like we are – and we want to be in that category – then certainly we need that type of department. I can see it being pretty good."

As it stands now there won't be a financial restriction on how programs build the support staffs.

"The NCAA is not hiding anything about that," Els said. "They've said 'Hey if you've

got the money to do it, then we'll make it legal for you to do it.'"

One concern voiced by head coach Bo Pelini and was repeated by Els, was the desire from the coaches to let the recruits live as high school individuals. Els recalled the early days of text messaging.

"We can control it, we're not going to go overboard," he said. "I'm so old I remember when texting first started coming out in the late 90s when it was legal to text. You'd get these recruits that would get up to 50 texts that said 'Good morning' and 'How are you?' You know, come on man, that's not recruiting. That's what is going to happen. Will we go to that end? If we have to, to get the right kid, we will. But we're not going to go overboard with it."

Ultimately, despite any protests Nebraska might have regarding the rule changes, the staff has to carry on. Els said he isn't worried about the staff adjusting to a more open realm of communication.

"We'll be able to handle it," Els said of the changes. "We'll be able to hire the right people and get more people into our recruiting offices. As coaches I'm not complaining from that end of it, I'm not crazy about it with the student athletes." **N**



**BIGTEN RECRUITING**

# Ohio State signs another elite recruiting class

*Wolverines, Buckeyes put together groups of signees who rank in the top five nationally.*

by DOUG GRIFFITHS

Remember the days the Big Ten was viewed as the Big Two and Little Eight? Well, if this year's recruiting cycle is any indication, it appears as though the Big Two has reemerged in the conference.

Ohio State and Michigan have the best of the best when it comes to the Big Ten's top 2013 recruiting classes.

The Buckeyes' 25 signees rank second nationally by 247Sports.com, while the Wolverines' 27-member class is regarded as the fifth-best haul in the country.

By inking one of the nation's finest recruiting classes, Coach Urban Meyer has now put back-to-back nationally renowned classes together and seem poised to not only be a force in the Big Ten for years to come, but be in the national championship discussion for the foreseeable future.

The Buckeyes' huge day addressed needs at wide receiver, in the secondary and up front.

"We went to bed last night with three guys that were very on edge as far as where (they were going)," admitted Meyer on Feb. 6, national signing day. "I thought if we hit one of three, that'd be all right. Two out of three would be a good day and three out of three would knock it out of the park. We hit three out of three, so I'm pleased."

The Buckeye boss should be real pleased with his recruiting haul, which is led by Rossville (Ga.) defensive back Vonn Bell, who many thought would sign with Tennessee. Considered a five-star prospect by most recruiting services, he's the biggest get. Not only did the 6-foot-1, 190-pounder have nearly 150 tackles and three interceptions as a senior in high school, but he tallied more than 1,700 all-purpose yards and scored 21 touchdowns on offense.

The other two prized recruits in Ohio State's class were wide receiver James Clark and running back Dontre Wilson.

The Buckeyes' class served notice to the rest of college football that Meyer can

still recruit nationwide just like he did when he was at SEC-powerhouse Florida.

OSU's class is so good it just very well could deliver the Scarlet and Gray and national championship in the near future.

As good as the Buckeyes' class is, Michigan's isn't far behind whatsoever. Brady Hoke collection features 10 linemen.

One of the headliners of the Maize and Blue class is four-star QB Shane Morris, who may emerge as Michigan's signal-caller of the future.

Nebraska boasts the only other top-25 class in the Big Ten.

Bo Pelini put a premium on offensive tackles (four) as well as defensive linemen (six) in the Class of 2013.

There's talent a plenty coming to Lincoln including four-star running back Adam Taylor, four-star QB Johnny Stanton and four-star OLB Marcus Newby.

Also, keep an eye on defensive end Randy Gregory, one of the very best the junior college ranks had to offer.

Considering the scholarship limitations put on Bill O'Brien's Penn State program, he was able to put together an impressive class, too.

With the departure of Matt McGloin, the Nittany Lions have an immediate need at quarterback so Tyler Ferguson, one of the top junior college quarterbacks in the country, along with standout Christian Hackenberg will be given every opportunity to see the field early in their Penn State careers.

First-year Wisconsin coach Gary Andersen put together a solid class, which surprisingly has only one offensive linemen in yet. What the class did address was the void in the secondary as its two early enrollees are a pair of cornerbacks.

Like Andersen, the Big Ten's other rookie coach Darrell Hazell didn't have much time to put together much of a class, but did manage to hang on to commit Danny Etling, a quarterback who may start as a true freshman, especially since

he's already enrolled at Purdue.

Following Huskers Illustrated recaps Big Ten recruiting overall as we list each of the conference school's top individual recruit with the team's overall national ranking (in parenthesis), according to 247Sports.com:

- **OHIO STATE (2):** Vonn Bell (5-11, 180) was rated as the nation's No. 3 S and the No. 29 player in the country.

- **MICHIGAN (5):** Derrick Green (6-0, 220) was the country's No. 8-rated RB and 84th-best player overall.

- **NEBRASKA (23):** Terrell Newby (5-10, 185) was rated the nation's 11th-best RB and 139th best player in the Class of 2013.

- **PENN STATE (26):** Christian Hackenberg (6-4, 210) was the nation's No. 1-ranked pro-style QB and seventh-best prospect overall.

- **MICHIGAN STATE (33):** Jon Reschke (6-2, 227) was the 18th-best ILB and the ranked the sixth-finest player in the state of Michigan.

- **WISCONSIN (37):** Corey Clement (5-11, 205) was rated No. 7 RB and 71st-best player nationally.

- **INDIANA (43):** Darius Latham (6-5, 291) was ranked the 14th-best OT and No. 160 nationally.

- **ILLINOIS (46):** Aaron Bailey (6-2, 225) was the nation's fifth-best dual-threat QB and 150th-best prospect overall.

- **NORTHWESTERN (50):** Matt Alviti (6-1, 180) was ranked the No. 7-best dual-threat QB and 225th-best prospect nationally.

- **IOWA (55):** Jon Wisnieski (6-5, 215) was rated the nation's 18th-best TE and second-best player in the state of Iowa.

- **PURDUE (62):** Danny Etling (6-2, 210) was ranked the 21st-best QB prospect and seventh-best player in the state of Indiana.

- **MINNESOTA (66):** Berkley Edwards (5-9, 185) was rated the nation's 25th-best all-purpose back and No. 11-best player in the state of Michigan.



**THEBIGTENBEAT**

# Big Ten Teams Prep For Spring Practice

*Many football programs across the conference are still searching for assistant coaches.* | DOUG GRIFFITHS

As Big Ten teams prepare to open spring football practices next month, they know the months of January and February are critical for off-season conditioning, weightlifting and getting any clean-up surgeries out of the way so players will at the very least be ready for fall camp in August.

At the same time, coaches have been swamped with recruiting visits and trying to make sure the verbal commitments they secured translated into signatures on national signing day Feb. 6.

With the hectic recruiting period behind them, at least for the time being, coaching staffs can now concentrate on doing what they love most ... prepping for the 15 NCAA-allot spring practices, including a spring game.

Teams will be allowed to practice in pads for 10 of those 15 practice sessions and most opt to conclude with a spring game in April before final examinations.

Some schools treat their spring games like a normal football Saturday in the fall, while others view it as a way to get exposure for their program and let their fans get an early glimpse of the team at no charge.

In addition, some schools really look forward to the spring game as a way to tap into their creative juices. Take Ohio State, for example. This season the Buckeyes are moving their spring game to Cincinnati where they'll play in the Bengals' Paul Brown Stadium April 13. Ticket prices for the game range from \$5-\$18.

And don't be surprised if OSU continues to play its spring game away from Ohio Stadium. Next year it's a safe bet the Buckeyes will have it in Cleveland.

A lot of coaches are luke warm at best to the idea of having spring games at all. In fact, some wouldn't mind if they were just punted entirely. However, fans seem to really enjoy them and just seeing their team go through the motions appeases them enough to get them through the summer months.

As much as schools would love to etch their plans for spring games in stone, they have to prepare for the unexpected. Injuries and even Mother Nature can force spring games to be altered and even cancelled.

Nebraska fans know all too well about the aforementioned scenario.

Last year the Cornhuskers' spring game ended prematurely due to a band of strong thunderstorms, which forced the annual Red-White Game to be cancelled. Officials hoped the game could be played the following day - on a Sunday - but Coach Bo Pelini said that was not an option because too many of his players had conflicts.

Nebraska athletic director Tom Osborne said at the time the athletic department would lose an estimated \$400,000 in revenue with the loss of concession and other merchandise sales.

The Cornhuskers had played a spring game every year since 1950.

Hopefully nothing will interfere with this year's event April 6 in Lincoln.

Following *Huskers Illustrated* takes a look at some of the latest football happenings at other Big Ten schools.

## ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI

Illini head coach Tim Beckman must fill another vacancy on his staff after Billy Gonzales, the team's co-offensive coordinator announced he's leaving for another job.

Gonzales shared offensive coordinator duties with Chris Beatty, who was fired after the 2012 season that saw Illinois average just 16.7 points per game (last in the Big Ten).

Former Western Michigan coach Bill Cubit was hired by Beckman in January to be his offensive coordinator.

Beckman currently has two openings on his staff as he is yet to replace defensive line coach Keith Gilmore, who departed for North Carolina.

## INDIANA HOOSIERS

The Hoosier program lost one of its own when Mark Hagen decided to leave Bloomington to join Kevin Sumlin's flourishing Texas A&M program as its linebackers coach.

Hagen, who was an All-Big Ten linebacker for IU, was an asset to Kevin Wilson's staff, particularly with his knack for recruiting the state of Indiana successfully.

• IU has had some roster changes that include cornerback Lawrence Barnett and wide receiver Jamonne Chester deciding not to return for their fifth seasons of eligibility. Five other players have opted to give up their eligi-

bility, while defensive end Justin Rayside has transferred to a Division II school.

Furthermore, running back Matt Perez and linebacker Ishmael Thomas, neither of whom played last season, will medically redshirt ending their collegiate careers.

## IOWA HAWKEYES

Like so many other Big Ten programs, Iowa doesn't have a full coaching staff.

The Hawkeyes are looking for a receivers coach after Erik Campbell, who was part of the program for five seasons, left to "pursue other opportunities," according to Coach Kirk Ferentz.

On national signing day, Ferentz would not elaborate on his coaching search and since he may not have a press conference until around the time spring practice starts (March 27), it's uncertain whether there will be a formal announcement on Campbell's replacement for a while.

Campbell may not be the lone assistant coach not returning to Ferentz's staff either.

"We'll see what the next couple of weeks will bring," Ferentz told *The Des Moines Register*.

You'll recall after the 2011 season Iowa parted ways with both of its coordinators. In addition, defensive line coach Rick Kaczinski went to Nebraska.

With an unsettled situation on his coaching staff, considering his Hawkeyes went 4-8 this past season and the fact that his recruiting class was ranked near the bottom of the Big Ten, Ferentz's appears to be on the preverbal hot seat.

## MICHIGAN WOLVERINES

Running back Fitz Toussaint will miss spring practice.

His absence is no surprise when you consider the nasty leg injury he suffered in the Iowa game in November.

Toussaint's leg, which snapped between his ankle and knee, required surgery.

"They say each week I'll be feeling better but I'll do everything in my will to come back and be ready for anything," he told mgoblue.com.

"It's been real difficult but I just think how mentally tough I am and I was able to focus on



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that."

Toussaint is expected to be ready for the 2013 season.

The Wolverines will need Toussaint to be healthy as he's the team's top returning rusher after gaining 514 yards on the ground and five touchdowns in 2012.

## MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS

Former Spartan standout defensive tackle and current Green Bay Packer Jerel Worthy was not too pleased with Michigan State's decision to not renew defensive line coach Ted Gill's contract last month.

Gill was part of MSU coach Mark Dantonio's staff for six seasons in East Lansing and three seasons in Cincinnati.

"Coach Ted Gill will always and forever be my coach!" Worthy tweeted. "Best influence that I have ever had as a player. Don't agree with the decision to let Him go but I know that will always be loved by many of us Spartans he helped achieve (our) dreams of making it to the NFL. Love ya COACH GILL."

Worthy continued tweeting, "No other position has more Spartans in the (NFL than) D Line over the past 6 seasons. Guess they missed that too huh."

Dantonio did not elaborate on Gill's departure. A search for his replacement is ongoing.

## MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

Gopher coach Jerry Kill has only coached two seasons in Minneapolis and signed three recruiting classes, but he's already receiving plenty of criticism.

It started when Minnesota lost to Texas Tech in the Meineke Car Care Bowl. Kill was questioned in his postgame press conference about calling a pass play for a freshman quarterback on third-and-seven with the score tied at 31 and less than a minute left in the game. That pass was intercepted and the turnover led to a short game-winning field goal as time expired.

Then the Gophers signed just one in-state player in their latest recruiting class and the class is widely regarded as the worst in the Big Ten, not featuring any player rated higher than a three-star prospect.

Needless to say, the honeymoon is over for Kill.

## NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS

Wrigley Field will be Northwestern's home away from home as the university announced it will play five future home football games in the home of the Chicago Cubs.

The exact dates and opponents for those games is unknown at this time due to the scheduling of Wrigley Field's multi-million

dollar restoration project.

Pat Fitzgerald's 2010 team hosted Illinois in the Friendly Confines, marking the first college football game at Wrigley since 1938. It was the first football game played in Wrigley since the Chicago Bears departed for Soldier Field following the 1970 season.

Northwestern lost that game to the Fighting Illini, 48-27.

Overshadowing the outcome of that game was all the publicity garnered due to the rule changes that had to be put in place as a result of safety concerns.

You might recall offensive plays ran only toward the west end zone near the third-base dugout. The reason for that was because the east end zone in right field came within a foot or so of the heavily padded outfield brick wall. When their were possession changes, the ball was repositioned.

The only score that occurred in the east end zone was an interception return by Northwestern.

Whether such rule changes will have to be implemented again for future football games is unknown, but is certainly something to keep an eye on.

Along with the football program, Wildcat baseball and lacrosse teams will have games at Wrigley Field in the coming years, too.

## OHIO STATE BUCKEYES

The Detroit Free Press recently wrote an interesting article titled "Is Ohio State gunning for Michigan ... or Alabama?"

The article's premise had to do with the Buckeyes' recruiting success against Alabama getting some prized prospects over the two-time defending national champion.

Ohio State coach Urban Meyer, however, tried to quiet any such talk saying the Buckeyes have one rival and one rival only and everyone knows who that is.

Interestingly enough Meyer doesn't like himself or anyone in his program saying the word "Michigan." As the Detroit Free Press points out, Meyer prefers "our rival" or "the team up north."

## PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS

Perhaps the NCAA's harsh sanctions are impacting Penn State's program.

To say the least, Bill O'Brien's program faces an uphill battle in recruiting over the next several seasons as Penn State can only offer 15 scholarships per seasons, 10 fewer than the maximum allowed. And by Sept. 1, 2014, the Nittany Lions' roster has to be 65 players.

O'Brien and his staff have an impossible task ahead, but the second-year coach is hell bent on trying to be as successful recruiting in

the state of Ohio as his predecessor Joe Paterno was.

"We've got to do a better job in Ohio," said O'Brien on national signing day. None of Penn State's 17 recruits are from the Buckeye State.

Keep in mind, as the NFL opened the 2012 season, there were 81 Ohio-born players on pro rosters (the fifth most of any state).

## PURDUE BOILERMAKERS

Receiver O.J. Ross' days may be numbers at Purdue.

He was recently suspended from the team for what's being called a violation of team rules.

This is not the first time Ross has had to take a leave of absence if you will from the Boilermaker football team. He was also suspended for the 2011 Little Caesars Bowl due to academics, which briefly cost him his scholarship, but he was reinstated in time for spring ball.

Whether Ross gets back in the good graces of new coach Darrell Hazell remains to be seen, but no doubt Purdue could use him when you consider he's the team's leading returning receivers after hauling in 56 catches for 454 yards last season.

It's a new era in Purdue football in that the Boilermakers are now competitive with their Big Ten brethren when it comes to coaches' salaries.

Hazell, who is earning \$2 million a year, has a compensation pool of \$2.1 million to pay assistant coaches.

Offensive coordinator John Shoop will make \$400,000 of that, while defensive coordinator Greg Hudson will earn \$395,000.

By comparison, former head coach Danny Hope made \$900,000 annually and his offensive coordinator Gary Nord made \$275,000, while his defensive coordinator Tim Tibesar earned \$250,000.

Hazell has seven of his nine assistant coaches in place. He still has to name a defensive line and tight ends/special teams coordinator.

## WISCONSIN BADGERS

Former Badger coach Bret Bielema has said one of the reasons he left Madison was an inability to adequately compensate assistant coaches. Wisconsin athletic director Barry Alvarez disagreed.

Last month the UW Board of Regents approved new contracts for first-year coach Gary Andersen, offensive coordinator Andy Ludwig and defensive coordinator Dave Aranda.

Andersen will receive \$10 million over five years, while Ludwig and Aranda inked two-year deals worth \$480,000 annually (their base salaries are \$300,000), according to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.



## ILLINOIS

April 12	Spring Game	7 p.m.
Aug. 31	Southern Illinois	TBD
Sept. 7	Cincinnati	TBD
Sept. 14	Washington (Soldier Field)	TBD
Sept. 28	Miami, Ohio	TBD
Oct. 5	at Nebraska	TBD
Oct. 19	Wisconsin	TBD
Oct. 26	Michigan State	TBD
Nov. 2	at Penn State	TBD
Nov. 9	at Indiana	TBD
Nov. 16	Ohio State	TBD
Nov. 23	at Purdue	TBD
Nov. 30	Northwestern	TBD

## 2013 STANDINGS

Legends	Conf.		Over.	
	W	L	W	L
Nebraska	0	0	0	0
Michigan	0	0	0	0
Northwestern	0	0	0	0
Michigan State	0	0	0	0
Minnesota	0	0	0	0
Iowa	0	0	0	0
Leaders	Conf.		Over.	
	W	L	W	L
Ohio State	0	0	0	0
Penn State	0	0	0	0
Wisconsin	0	0	0	0
Purdue	0	0	0	0
Indiana	0	0	0	0
Illinois	0	0	0	0

## IOWA

Aug. 31	vs. Northern Illinois	TBD
Sept. 7	Missouri State	TBD
Sept. 14	at Iowa State	TBD
Sept. 21	Western Michigan	TBD
Sept. 28	at Minnesota	TBD
Oct. 5	Michigan State	TBD
Oct. 19	at Ohio State	TBD
Oct. 26	Northwestern	TBD
Nov. 2	Wisconsin	TBD
Nov. 9	at Purdue	TBD
Nov. 23	Michigan	TBD
Nov. 30	at Nebraska	TBD

## MICHIGAN

Aug. 31	Central Michigan	TBD
Sept. 7	Notre Dame	TBD
Sept. 14	Akron	TBD
Sept. 21	at Connecticut	TBD
Oct. 5	Minnesota	TBD
Oct. 12	at Penn State	TBD
Oct. 19	Indiana	TBD
Nov. 2	at Michigan State	TBD
Nov. 9	Nebraska	TBD
Nov. 16	at Northwestern	TBD
Nov. 23	at Iowa	TBD
Nov. 30	Ohio State	TBD

## MICHIGAN STATE

April 20	Spring Game	1 p.m.
Aug. 31	Western Michigan	TBD
Sept. 7	South Florida	TBD
Sept. 14	Youngstown State	TBD
Sept. 21	Notre Dame	TBD
Oct. 5	at Iowa	TBD
Oct. 12	Indiana	TBD
Oct. 19	Purdue	TBD
Oct. 26	at Illinois	TBD
Nov. 2	Michigan	TBD
Nov. 16	at Nebraska	TBD
Nov. 23	at Northwestern	TBD

## MINNESOTA

Aug. 29	UNLV	TBD
Sept. 7	at New Mexico State	TBD
Sept. 14	Western Illinois	TBD
Sept. 21	San Jose State	TBD
Sept. 28	Iowa	TBD
Oct. 5	at Michigan	TBD
Oct. 19	at Northwestern	TBD
Oct. 26	Nebraska	TBD
Nov. 2	at Indiana	TBD
Nov. 9	Penn State	TBD
Nov. 23	Wisconsin	TBD
Nov. 30	at Michigan State	TBD

## INDIANA

April 13	Spring Game	TBD
Aug. 31	Indiana State	TBD
Sept. 7	Navy	TBD
Sept. 14	Bowling Green	TBD
Sept. 21	Missouri	TBD
Oct. 5	vs Penn State	TBD
Oct. 12	at Michigan State	TBD
Oct. 19	at Michigan	TBD
Nov. 2	Minnesota	TBD
Nov. 9	Illinois	TBD
Nov. 16	at Wisconsin	TBD
Nov. 23	at Ohio State	TBD
Nov. 30	Purdue	TBD

## NORTHWESTERN

Aug. 31	at California	TBD
Sept. 7	Syracuse	TBD
Sept. 14	Western Michigan	TBD
Sept. 21	Maine	TBD
Oct. 5	Ohio State	TBD
Oct. 12	at Wisconsin	TBD
Oct. 19	Minnesota	TBD
Oct. 26	at Iowa	TBD
Nov. 2	at Nebraska	TBD
Nov. 16	Michigan	TBD
Nov. 23	Michigan State	TBD
Nov. 30	at Illinois	TBD

## OHIO STATE

April 13	Spring Game	1 p.m.
Aug. 31	Buffalo	TBD
Sept. 7	San Diego State	TBD
Sept. 14	California	TBD
Sept. 21	Florida A&M	TBD
Sept. 28	Wisconsin	TBD
Oct. 5	at Northwestern	TBD
Oct. 19	Iowa	TBD
Oct. 26	Penn State	TBD
Nov. 2	at Purdue	TBD
Nov. 16	at Illinois	TBD
Nov. 23	Indiana	TBD
Nov. 30	at Michigan	TBD

## PENN STATE

Aug. 31	at Syracuse	TBD
Sept. 7	Eastern Michigan	TBD
Sept. 14	Virginia	TBD
Sept. 21	Kent State	TBD
Oct. 5	at Indiana	TBD
Oct. 12	Michigan	TBD
Oct. 26	at Ohio State	TBD
Nov. 2	Illinois	TBD
Nov. 9	at Minnesota	TBD
Nov. 16	Purdue	TBD
Nov. 23	Nebraska	TBD
Nov. 30	at Wisconsin	TBD

## PURDUE

Aug. 31	at Cincinnati	TBD
Sept. 7	Indiana State	TBD
Sept. 14	Notre Dame	TBD
Sept. 21	at Wisconsin	TBD
Sept. 28	Northern Illinois	TBD
Oct. 12	Nebraska	TBD
Oct. 19	at Michigan State	TBD
Nov. 2	Ohio State	TBD
Nov. 9	Iowa	TBD
Nov. 16	at Penn State	TBD
Nov. 23	Illinois	TBD
Nov. 30	at Indiana	TBD

## WISCONSIN

Aug. 31	Massachusetts	TBD
Sept. 7	Tennessee Tech	TBD
Sept. 14	at Arizona State	TBD
Sept. 21	Purdue	TBD
Sept. 28	at Ohio State	TBD
Oct. 12	Northwestern	TBD
Oct. 19	at Illinois	TBD
Nov. 2	at Iowa	TBD
Nov. 9	BYU	TBD
Nov. 16	Indiana	TBD
Nov. 23	at Minnesota	TBD
Nov. 30	Penn State	TBD



## Huskers riding five-game streak

STORY BY DARREN IVY | PHOTO BY JOSH WOLFE

**S**ince losing back-to-back conference games to Penn State in the middle of January, the Nebraska women's basketball team has been on a tear.

The Huskers (17-6 overall and 7-3 in the Big Ten) most recently defeated Northwestern 55-50 in Evanston.

Nebraska led 25-17 at halftime while holding the Wildcats to a season-low point total in the first 20 minutes.

The Huskers built a 15-point lead in the second half before having to hang on down the stretch.

In this game, senior Lindsey Moore and junior Jordan Hooper both went over 1,500 career points.

Hooper finished with a game-high 19 points, while adding seven rebounds, and Moore pitched in 16 points, two assists and four steals. Hooper and Moore also sank four straight free throws in the final 20 seconds to seal Nebraska's fifth-straight victory.

Hooper now has 1,516 career points. Moore, meanwhile, has 1,505 career points. The duo joined Maurice Ivy and Angie Miller in 1986-87 as the only Huskers to play together in the same season with 1,500 or more career points. Ivy (1,578) and Miller (1,541) ended 1986-87 with more than 1,500 points apiece. No Husker teammates have ever reached 1,600 career points in the same year.

### Moore breaks consecutive starts record for Nebraska

Moore made her 121st consecutive start of her career at Northwestern to surpass the old record of 120-straight starts that was set by Meggan Yedsena from 1991-94.

Moore has now started every single game of her career and has a 86-35 record as the starting point guard for the Huskers.

Yedsena is the only Husker in history to start every game of a four-year career. Kelsey Griffin, a 2010 first-team All-American and a teammate of Moore's in 2009-10, owns the NU career record

with 127 starts in 127 career games over a five-year period.

Moore's streak of 121 consecutive starts for the Huskers is tied with Penn State's Nikki Greene for the second-longest active starting streak in the nation.

Moore's streak trails only Texas Tech's Monique Smalls, who owns 124 straight starts (102, plus 22 in 2012-13).

Greene joins Moore with 120 straight starts. Greene has started 120 consecutive games (99, plus 21 in 2012-13).

### NU's final game at Devaney Center to be on BTN

The final Nebraska women's basketball game at the Bob Devaney Sports Center on Sunday, March 3, has been chosen for the final BTN slot of the Big Ten regular season.

Nebraska's Senior Day game with No. 8 Penn State will tip off at 5:01 p.m. The game will be the finale of a Big Ten women's basketball quadruple-header on the network on Sunday, March 3.

Nebraska's game with Penn State could have conference title implications and an impact on the top four seeds at the tournament as well. The game also will be Senior Day for Moore and Meghan Williams.

### Moore ranks second at NU in career assists

Moore became just the second Husker in history to reach the 600-career assist mark against Illinois Jan. 17. She currently ranks No. 2 on the Husker all-time assist chart with 629, trailing only school record holder Meggan Yedsena (696, 1991-94). Moore is just the eighth player in Big Ten Conference history to reach 600 career assists.

### Hooper, Theriot pick up Big Ten weekly honors

Hooper and Rachel Theriot swept the Big Ten Conference's weekly individual awards announced on Feb. 5. Hooper, a 6-2 junior forward from Alliance, Neb., captured her second Big Ten Player-of-the-Week honor of the season after

## Women's Basketball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME/SCORE
OCT. 29	PITT STATE (EXHIB.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 78-34
NOV. 4	UNK (EXHIB.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 68-38
NOV. 9	NORTH CAROLINA A&T	DEVANEY CENTER	W 68-50
NOV. 11	TEMPLE	DEVANEY CENTER	W 64-39
NOV. 16	NORTHERN ARIZONA	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 77-55
NOV. 18	SOUTH DAKOTA STATE	AT BROOKINGS S.D. L.	60-55
NOV. 20	SAM HOUSTON STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 85-72
<b>ACC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE</b>			
NOV. 28	MARYLAND	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 90-71
DEC. 1	IDAHO STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 60-51
DEC. 5	CREIGHTON	AT OMAHA (SOKOL)	L, 66-57
DEC. 8	FLORIDA STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 78-77
DEC. 16	SOUTH FLORIDA	AT TAMPA, FLA.	W, 62-52
DEC. 20	ORAL ROBERTS	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 80-67
DEC. 29	GRAMBLING STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 84-39
JAN. 2	WISCONSIN*	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 70-52
JAN. 5	PURDUE*	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 69-66 (OT)
JAN. 10	INDIANA*	AT BLOOMINGTON, IND.	W, 67-38
JAN. 13	PENN STATE*	AT UNIVERSITY PARK, PA	L, 78-58
JAN. 17	ILLINOIS*	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 62-52
JAN. 20	MINNESOTA*	AT MINNEAPOLIS	W, 84-63
JAN. 24	MICHIGAN STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 59-54
JAN. 31	OHIO STATE*	AT COLUMBUS, OH.	W, 62-53
FEB. 3	MINNESOTA*	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 80-56
FEB. 7	NORTHWESTERN*	AT EVANSTON, ILL.	W, 55-50
FEB. 11	IOWA*	IOWA CITY, IA.	7:30 P.M.
FEB. 14	OHIO STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
FEB. 21	MICHIGAN*	AT ANN ARBOR, MICH.	6 P.M.
FEB. 24	IOWA*	DEVANEY CENTER	2 P.M.
FEB. 26	WISCONSIN*	AT MADISON, WIS.	TBA
MAR. 3	PENN STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	TBA

### BIG TEN TOURNAMENT

MAR. 7-MAR. 10 TBA AT HOFFMAN ESTATES, ILL. TBA

### NCAA TOURNAMENT

MAR. 23-APR 8 TBA TBA

\* BIG TEN MATCH;

ALL TIMES CENTRAL. DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Adrianna Maurer (55) and Emily Cady run onto the court before a home game earlier this season.



averaging 27.5 points and 7.0 rebounds in Nebraska's wins over Ohio State and Minnesota.

Hooper increased her team-leading season averages to 19.0 points and 8.6 rebounds per contest. Hooper won her first Big Ten Player-of-the-Week award this season on Dec. 24. She was a three-time conference player of the week as a sophomore, and the 2012 first-team All-Big Ten selection owns five career awards in less than two full seasons.

Theriot, a 6-0 point guard from Middleburg Heights, Ohio, added the third Big Ten Freshman-of-the-Week honor of her career. Theriot produced the best week of her young career by averaging 10.0 points, 6.0 rebounds, 5.5 assists and 1.5 steals in wins over Ohio State and Minnesota.

Theriot hit 75 percent (9-12) of her shots from the field on the week, including a perfect 5-for-5 performance to finish with 11 points against Minnesota. She also tied her career high with seven rebounds against the Gophers and dished out five assists without committing a turnover.

Theriot, who won Big Ten Freshman-of-the-Week honors on Dec. 31 and Jan.

22, has increased her season averages to 5.4 points, 3.0 rebounds and 3.2 assists per game. She has started 16 straight games for the Huskers, despite battling a foot injury throughout the year. During Nebraska's current four-game winning streak, Theriot is averaging 8.8 points, 5.3 rebounds and 5.3 assists, while producing a 3-to-1 assist-to-turnover ratio.

### Turner signs WNBA training camp contract

Former Husker and Nebraska native Yvonne Turner signed a WNBA training camp contract with San Antonio on Feb. 6. Turner, a first-team All-Big 12 selection and the conference Co-Defensive Player of the Year in 2010, is in her third season of professional basketball overseas after going undrafted by the WNBA following her senior season at Nebraska in 2010.

Turner, a 5-8 guard from Omaha, was the 2006 Gatorade Nebraska High School Player of the Year and a first-team WBCA All-American at Bellevue East. She was a three-year starter for the Huskers and helped Nebraska to the best season in school history in 2009-10, as NU finished

32-2 and 16-0 in the Big 12 on its way to the NCAA Sweet 16.

Turner, who has played professionally in Australia and Germany the past two seasons, is currently playing for Dynamo-GVD Novosibirsk in Siberia. Competing in Europe's best domestic league, Turner is averaging 13.6 points, 3.1 assists and 2.6 rebounds per game this season. Turner is expected to join former Husker teammate Kelsey Griffin when WNBA training camps open later this spring following the completion of the collegiate season. Griffin, who was a first-team All-American and the Big 12 Player of the Year as a senior alongside Turner in 2010, has spent the past three seasons with the Connecticut Sun.

Griffin is currently playing professionally in Australia for the Bendigo Spirit with former Husker and 2012 Canadian Olympian Chelsea Aubry. Another former teammate of Turner, Griffin and Aubry, Cory Montgomery, is playing in the same Australian league for the Logan Thunder. Montgomery was also a first-team All-Big 12 pick in 2010 and a third-round WNBA selection of the New York Liberty.



## Younger Shields loves his hoops

Despite being the son of an NFL star, NU freshman couldn't get enough basketball

STORY BY DOUG GRIFFITHS | PHOTO BY DARREN IVY

**S**havon Shields' father knew his son had a love for the game of basketball at an early age. When the Cornhusker freshman guard/forward was 3 or 4 years old he would shoot baskets for hours upon hours.

"At an early age, he would just shoot over and over," said Shields' father, Will, a first-team All-American and Outland Trophy winning offensive lineman for Nebraska.

The younger Shields became an admitted basketball junkie who simply couldn't get enough of the game.

His father is quick to point out that tons of hard work, including Shavon's mother being his designated rebounder in the driveway, was the reason he's a starter in the Big Ten today.

"Fortunately my wife would work on his game, rebounding and stuff like that," Will said.

While Shavon was growing up, his father was busy being one of the top offensive guards in the NFL. He started 231-straight games and went to the Pro Bowl every year from 1995 to 2006 playing for the Kansas City Chiefs. This year Shields was one of the final 15 modern-era candidates for election to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, but was eliminated before the cut to 10 finalists for the second year in a row.

Don't think the young Shields didn't give football a try. He did, but not until he was in seventh grade. The sport didn't have much of a chance over basketball, however, especially when he was put on the offensive line and made to block players that were 40 and 50 pounds heavier than he was.

"They put me on the offensive line because of my dad and I was one of the smaller kids on the team," Shavon said. "My eighth grade year I played receiver

and I never got the ball. It wasn't fun at all."

His father added, "After that, I think he said to himself, 'I'm going to play a sport I love.'"

The elder Shields more than understood and supported his son fully in his dream of playing major college basketball.

"My dad never pushed me to play football or follow in his footsteps," Shavon said.

And like his father, Shavon is making the most of his opportunity at Nebraska.

Appearing in 18 of his first 23 games, he is the team's fourth-leading scorer, averaging 7.4 points per game, and is the third-best rebounder (4.8).

Shavon's best night as a Cornhusker to date came on Jan. 19 when he went off for 29 points in Nebraska's 68-64 win at Penn State.

Nearly everything he shot at the basket went in. Shields hit 10-of-11 shots from the floor and made all eight of his free throws in a game he'll never forget.

It was a performance that nearly rewrote the Nebraska records books, falling just two points shy of breaking Tyronn Lue's 1996 Cornhusker freshman record.

"It was one of my favorite games," said Shields when asked where it ranked in his basketball career. "It's high up there. To have a game like that in the Big Ten as a freshman, I'll never forget it."

It was a week that Shields will never forget either. Prior to his performance in Happy Valley, he scored 18 points against Purdue.

As a result, Shields was named Big Ten Freshman of the Week, quite an honor when you consider the competition.

Shields knew early on that he would not only have an opportunity to play as a true freshman, but to have a significant impact.

"Coming into this season, Coach (Tim)

### Men's Basketball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME/SCORE
NOV. 7	MIDLAND (EXHIB.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 68-40
NOV. 11	SOUTHERN	DEVANEY CENTER	W 66-55
JOE CIPRIANO NEBRASKA CLASSIC			
NOV. 15	VALPARAISO	DEVANEY CENTER	W 50-48
NOV. 18	NEBRASKA-OMAHA	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 75-62
NOV. 21	TULANE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 61-57
NOV. 24	KENT STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 74-60
ACC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE			
NOV. 27	WAKE FOREST	AT WINSTON-SALEM, NC	W, 79-63
DEC. 3	USC	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 63-51
DEC. 6	CREIGHTON	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 64-42
DEC. 15	OREGON	AT EUGENE, ORE.	L, 60-38
DEC. 18	JACKSONVILLE STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 59-55
SUN BOWL INVITATIONAL			
DEC. 22	CENTRAL MICHIGAN	AT EL PASO, TEX.	W, 89-75
DEC. 23	UTEP	AT EL PASO, TEX.	L, 68-52
DEC. 29	NICHOLLS STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 68-59
JAN. 2	OHIO STATE*	AT COLUMBUS, OH.	L, 70-44
JAN. 6	WISCONSIN*	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 47-41
JAN. 9	MICHIGAN*	AT ANN ARBOR, MICH.	L, 62-47
JAN. 13	MICHIGAN STATE*	AT EAST LANSING, MICH.	L, 66-56
JAN. 16	PURDUE*	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 65-56
JAN. 19	PENN STATE*	AT UNIVERSITY PARK, PA	W, 68-64
JAN. 22	ILLINOIS*	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 71-51
JAN. 26	NORTHWESTERN*	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 64-49
JAN. 29	MINNESOTA*	AT MINNEAPOLIS	L, 84-65
FEB. 2	OHIO STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 63-56
FEB. 9	PENN STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
FEB. 13	INDIANA*	AT BLOOMINGTON, IND.	6 P.M.
FEB. 16	MICHIGAN STATE*	DEVANEY CENTER	7 P.M.
FEB. 21	IOWA*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
FEB. 26	WISCONSIN*	AT MADISON, WIS.	8 P.M.
MAR. 2	ILLINOIS*	AT CHAMPAIGN, ILL.	TBA
MAR. 6	MINNESOTA*	DEVANEY CENTER	8 P.M.
MAR. 9	IOWA*	IOWA CITY, IA.	1:15 P.M.
BIG TEN TOURNAMENT			
MAR. 14-MAR. 17	TBA	AT CHICAGO, ILL.	TBA
NCAA TOURNAMENT			
MAR. 19-APR 8	TBA		TBA

\* BIG TEN MATCH;  
ALL TIMES CENTRAL, DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Miles said he needed me to step up and play this year so I knew I had to be ready to play mentally,” Shields said. “I feel like I’ve played pretty well.”

Shields’ rookie season didn’t start the way he wanted it to.

He suffered a ruptured bursa sac in his elbow that led to an infection which required surgery. That injury sidelined him for three weeks. Once he was cleared, he jammed his wrist and missed some more time.

Shields admits that it was tough starting his college career on the shelf and it has been difficult dealing with the team’s struggles in Big Ten play.

“I’m one of those people that hates to lose,” he said. “You could be one of the best players on one of the worst teams and nobody will remember you. People remember the great teams.

“We’re just trying to get this program going, get it turned around and get it wins. I know we can do it.”

Shields has always had a blazing competitive fire. He recalls playing Little League baseball, and if he struck out he would go to the dugout “almost in tears.”

And his competitive blood isn’t exclusive just to sports.

“Playing Catch Phrase with the family or anything like that I get competitive,” Shields said.

Growing up, Shields had some experiences most kids can only dream of. He loved being the son of an NFL star.

“That’s what dad did to support the family so you sort of just went with it,” Shavon said.

When he was really young, he was on the Chiefs’ sidelines during games, was often seen outside the locker room following games and was a regular at team practices.

“During the off-season and when I was out of school, I would go up to the practice facility while he trained and worked out,” Shavon said. “I was around it a little bit, but I wouldn’t say I was around it all the time.”

Getting to hang out with the likes of Priest Holmes and Dante Hall isn’t too bad a life, especially for a young kid would you say?

“You could say I was blessed,” Shavon said.

Shields appears to be a blessing for Nebraska’s basketball program, too.

He has all the ingredients Miles is looking for his players to have.

The Cornhusker boss knows that Shields will be a big part of what he hopes is the start of something special in Lincoln.

After all, with a week like the one Shields

**Shavon Shields drives to the basket against Ohio State.**



enjoyed last month, there’s no telling what the future might hold for the Olathe, Kan. native.

“I told him, lets not put a ceiling out there and say this is what I think you can do, lets just try to keep getting better and better,” Miles said. “That’s what I expect Shavon to do.”

And that’s what he’s been doing and he still has three years of eligibility remaining.

“Shavon has been outstanding for us,” Miles said.

“He’s such an honest kid, a kid that works really hard and really cares about the state of the program. Those are the kinds of guys you want to build around.”



# Husker Wrestling

Caleb Kolb at 197 pounds is shown wrestling earlier this season against Illinois. He was one of six NU wrestlers to pick up wins against Michigan State in the 23-19 victory over the Spartans in the final dual ever at the NU Coliseum.



## NU's final dual at Coliseum ends in dramatic win

STORY COURTESY OF NU MEDIA RELATIONS | PHOTO BY RANCE RISTAU

The No. 13 Nebraska wrestling team trailed heading into the final match at the NU Coliseum against Michigan State, 19-17, before redshirt freshman Austin Wilson pinned Nick Proctor.

Wilson's fall gave the Huskers a 23-19 victory over Michigan State in the final competition at the Coliseum before the wrestlers move to the Bob Devaney Sports Center next season.

Nebraska improves to 10-4 on the season, with a 4-3 record in Big Ten duals.

Wilson (165) faced a 2-0 deficit in the second period against Proctor before a takedown that led to the pin in 3:45. The NU Coliseum crowd of 1,742 erupted following the win, which propelled the Huskers to victory.

Wilson improves to 24-9 with a 7-3 record in duals. He picked up his seventh consecutive win dating back to last weekend's third-place finish at the Grand View Open.

Sophomore Robert Kokesh (174) extended his winning streak to 22 with a 19-3 technical fall over Michigan State's

Jordan Wohlfert. Kokesh, who is ranked No. 3 by InterMat, improves to 27-1 with the win and 13-1 in dual competition. The technical fall was his fifth of the 2012-13 campaign.

Josh Ihnen, who was one of five Huskers honored as part of the Senior Night festivities, continued the NU momentum with a 6-1 decision over John Rizqallah at 184 pounds. Ihnen, who is ranked eighth by InterMat, moves to 19-3 on the season. He picked up the 92nd victory of his career with the win.

Junior Caleb Kolb extended the Nebraska lead to 11-0 with his 4-1 decision over the Spartans' Nick McDiarmid at 197 pounds. Kolb snapped a five-match losing streak and improves to 10-14 overall and 5-9 in duals.

The Huskers suffered three consecutive losses at heavyweight, 125 and 133 en route to a 13-11 Spartan lead. Sophomore Spencer Johnson (HWT) was tied with No. 7 Michael McClure, 2-2, in the third period before a McClure takedown. The Spartan junior added a point for rid-

ing time en route to a 5-2 decision for his 26th win of the season. Johnson drops to 2-3 with the loss.

Freshman Eric Coufal fell by a 14-1 major decision at 125 pounds to Brennan Lyon. The Huskers took an 11-7 lead into intermission, where gold medalist Jordan Burroughs and Athletic Director Emeritus Tom Osborne were honored. The Huskers forfeited the first match following the break at 133 pounds, giving Michigan State a slim 13-11 lead.

Senior Ridge Kiley (141) responded with an 8-2 decision over Nick Trimble to regain the lead in the dual, 14-13. The Spartans struck back at 149 pounds as Dan Osterman pinned No. 7 Jake Suefloh in 2:55. Suefloh, a sophomore, suffered his fourth loss of the season and drops to 8-3 in duals. Michigan State took a 19-14 lead into the final two matches.

No. 6 James Green (157) won a 5-2 decision over Ryan Watts to give the Huskers hope before Wilson's pin ultimately secured the win. Green improves to 16-2 on the season and 9-1 in duals.



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## Erstad to count on a veteran offense

*Huskers look to shore up defense, develop a consistent rotation on the mound.*

STORY BY GRANT MUESSEL | PHOTO BY RANCE RISTAU

**IN DARIN ERSTAD'S SECOND YEAR AS THE NEBRASKA BASEBALL HEAD COACH, THE FOCUS OF HIS HUSKERS LIES IN PROOF. THE PROOF ALREADY EXISTS FOR CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE TEAM, BUT NOT YET FOR OTHERS.**

Erstad's ready to prove he has a complete team that'll drive opponents to madness.

"We're gonna be an uncomfortable team to play," he said. "Are we going to have eye-popping skill sets all over the field? Probably not. But I'm totally fine with that because week in and week out if you bring that mentality, it's no fun to play teams like that."

For the offense, the proof is on the table. Nebraska, which led the Big Ten in runs, RBIs, home runs, 916 total bases, on-base percentage and slugging, returns the core of its leadership from 2011, and a new approach at the plate that began with Erstad's regime last season. The defense however, is searching to prove that 2011 was down year, and pitching is on its way up. With an out-of-conference schedule including Cal State Fullerton, Texas, Arkansas and UC Irvine, Nebraska gets to prove itself before a home crowd even gets to lay eyes on it.

"I just can't grasp my mind around playing .200 RPI teams," Erstad said. "That just doesn't sound very fun to me, and these guys want a challenge."

Opening day kicks off for Nebraska Feb. 15 in California against CSU Bakersfield, a team that split two games with the Huskers in 2011. Nebraska finishes the away weekend with a double-header against 22nd-ranked Cal State Fullerton before a Sunday finish at USC.

A week later, the Huskers return to Austin for a 3-game weekend series with former Big 12 foe Texas.

The home season opens at Hawks Field March 1 against New Mexico and a mid-week 2-game series with Northern Colorado. Then the Huskers travel to Louisiana Tech, UC Irvine and back to Fullerton. After a game at Kansas State, the Big Ten slate opens for Nebraska against Illinois in Champaign.



Kyle Kubat delivers a pitch during NU's first practice of the spring.

The team won't return home until March 29, but that's nothing new for the Husker veterans.

"We've just got to know how to go in to other teams' house and respond," senior Josh Scheffert said.

With guys on the team who've been to Texas and know what to expect, he said the Huskers welcome the challenge that could vault their RPI enough to host a regional tournament – the first major yearly goal.

After exiting the Big Ten tournament just three games in, proof comes back into play for the Huskers, projected to finish between second and fourth in the conference. Indiana is the favorite by most media outlet standards.

In order to get to the ultimate goal of Omaha, junior outfielder Michael Pritchard said Nebraska needs first to back up the offensive output from Erstad's first year in 2011. They've already proven the ability to score a dozen runs in a given game, but it they're not notching their belts on last year's numbers.

"Coach Bolt says what we did last year doesn't mean anything," Pritchard said. "We're going in with the same approach; nothing we did matters."

The Huskers jumped from hitting .270 as a team in 2011 to hitting .315 in 2012 in Erstad and company's first year at Nebraska; good for eighth in the country. Nebraska's three All-Big Ten members



## 2013 Baseball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME/SCORE
FEB 15	CSU BAKERSFIELD	BAKERSFIELD, CA	5 P.M.
FEB 16	CAL STATE FULLERTON	FULLERTON, CA	4 P.M.
FEB 16	CAL STATE FULLERTON	FULLERTON, CA	7 P.M.
FEB 17	USC	LOS ANGELES, CA	4 P.M.
FEB 22	TEXAS	AUSTIN, TEXAS	7 P.M.
FEB 23	TEXAS	AUSTIN, TEXAS	1 P.M.
FEB 24	TEXAS	AT AUSTIN, TEXAS	12 P.M.
MAR 1	NEW MEXICO	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 P.M.
MAR 2	NEW MEXICO	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 P.M.
MAR 3	NEW MEXICO	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 P.M.
MAR 5	NORTHERN COLORADO	HAWKS FIELD	1:35 P.M.
MAR 6	NORTHERN COLORADO	HAWKS FIELD	1:35 P.M.
MAR 8	LOUISIANA TECH	RUSTON, LA.	6 P.M.
MAR 9	LOUISIANA TECH	RUSTON, LA.	3 P.M.
MAR 10	LOUISIANA TECH	RUSTON, LA.	10 A.M.
MAR 15	UC IRVINE	IRVINE, CA	8:30 P.M.
MAR 16	UC IRVINE	IRVINE, CA	3 P.M.
MAR 17	UC IRVINE	IRVINE, CA	3 P.M.
MAR 19	CAL STATE FULLERTON	FULLERTON, CA	8 P.M.
MAR 20	CAL STATE FULLERTON	FULLERTON, CA	8 P.M.
MAR 22	ILLINOIS *	CHAMPAIGN, IL	4:05 P.M.
MAR 23	ILLINOIS *	CHAMPAIGN, IL	3:05 P.M.
MAR 24	ILLINOIS *	CHAMPAIGN, IL	1:05 P.M.
MAR 26	KANSAS STATE	MANHATTAN, KS	6:30 P.M.
MAR 29	NORTHWESTERN *	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 P.M.
MAR 30	NORTHWESTERN *	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 P.M.
MAR 31	NORTHWESTERN *	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 P.M.
APR 2	KANSAS STATE	MANHATTAN, KS	6:30 P.M.
APR 5	IOWA *	IOWA CITY, IOWA	6:05 P.M.
APR 6	IOWA *	IOWA CITY, IOWA	1:05 P.M.
APR 7	IOWA *	IOWA CITY, IOWA	1:05 P.M.
APR 9	CREIGHTON	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 P.M.
APR 12	OHIO STATE *	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 P.M.
APR 13	OHIO STATE *	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 P.M.
APR 14	OHIO STATE *	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 P.M.
APR 16	ARKANSAS	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 P.M.
APR 17	ARKANSAS	HAWKS FIELD	1:35 P.M.
APR 19	PURDUE *	WEST LAFAYETTE, IN	6 P.M.
APR 20	PURDUE *	WEST LAFAYETTE, IN	6 P.M.
APR 21	PURDUE *	WEST LAFAYETTE, IN	11 A.M.
APR 23	KANSAS STATE	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 P.M.
TD AMERITRADE CLASSIC			
APR 26	CREIGHTON	OMAHA, NEB.	6:30 P.M.
APR 27	OKLAHOMA STATE	OMAHA, NEB.	11 A.M.
APR 27	OKLAHOMA STATE	OMAHA, NEB.	3 P.M.
APR 28	RUTGERS	OMAHA, NEB.	1 P.M.
MAY 4	INDIANA *	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 P.M.
MAY 5	INDIANA *	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 P.M.
MAY 6	INDIANA *	HAWKS FIELD	12:05 P.M.
MAY 10	MINNESOTA *	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	6:35 P.M.
MAY 11	MINNESOTA *	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	2:05 P.M.
MAY 12	MINNESOTA *	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	1:05 P.M.
MAY 14	CREIGHTON	OMAHA, NEB.	7 P.M.
MAY 16	MICHIGAN *	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 P.M.
MAY 17	MICHIGAN (PARENTS DAY) *	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 P.M.
MAY 18	MICHIGAN (SENIOR DAY) *	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 P.M.
BIG TEN TOURNAMENT			
MAY 22 - MAY 26	TBA	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	TBA
NCAA TOURNAMENT			
MAY 31 - JUN 3	NCAA REGIONAL AT CAMPUS SITES	TBA	
JUN 7 - JUN 10	NCAA SUPER REGIONAL AT CAMPUS SITES		
JUN 15 - JUN 26	COLLEGE WORLD SERIES AT OMAHA, NEB.		

\* CONFERENCE GAMES

ALL TIMES CENTRAL. DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Chad Christensen, Rich Sanguinetti and Pritchard all return to play in 2013.

Kale Kiser and Richard Stock departed; taking with them Nebraska's leads in doubles, triple and walks.

Off a highly-improved sophomore-to-junior season transition, Scheffert said he hopes he can take on a leadership role as a senior that helps younger teammates realize their potential like Coach Will Bolt did for him.

"Before I would say I was just going up there and I didn't have an approach," Scheffert said. "Freshman year I had an approach but I didn't know it. I was just doing what the coaches told me to do."

Under the tutelage of Coach Erstad and Coach Bolt, Scheffert said the Huskers approach every pitch with a higher sense of situational awareness. It's going to be the key to replicating the high-powered offense of 2012, he said.

"They try to teach us here more along the lines of why things are being done, why you're doing this and why you're looking for this pitch," he said. "Way deeper understanding."

Scheffert boosted his batting average from .220 to .358 under the Erstad regime, good for second on the team. Pritchard led Nebraska hitters, batting .387 with team leading 82 hits, 51 runs and 21 walks as a sophomore. He'll get plenty of looks at DH in 2012, Erstad said. The outfield seems to be shaping up with Christensen making a permanent move to left field, with a bulked-up Austin Darby taking over in right.

Perhaps the most intriguing battle is found behind the plate, with a three-way competition for catcher among junior college transfers Tanner Lubach and Corey Stringer, in addition to redshirt freshman Taylor Fish. All three share a lack of experience; they'll all play their first games in Nebraska uniforms this spring.

"We're kind of playing that same old angle of 'every day in practice counts,'" Erstad said of the starting battle for catcher. "They're responding to it well. I told them 'look, I want you to make this as hard on me as physically possible.'"

Erstad said the staff has an idea of who the player in the No. 1 spot is right now, but it's not enough to delegate all the starting reps. He likes the competition, too.

The starting rotation on the mound has cleared up in the weeks leading into

the season. According to Erstad, lefties Zach Hirsch and Kyle Kubat lead the way along with right-handers Ryan Hander and Brandon Pierce.

"I think it's safe to say Kubat and Hander have earned a right to start on the weekend after how much they helped us at the end of the year," Erstad said.

Erstad said Dylan Vogt is the No. 1 closer for his Huskers though, leaving no doubt.

Said Erstad: "That one's pretty much a slam dunk. He's our closer but he might close in the fifth."

Vogt said he's comfortable in the role thanks to the defenders; a year wiser with even more added intensity from Coach Bolt.

"I've just got to go out there and be able to close the game out," he said. "You know, fill up the strike zone. I've got to pitch to contact and let the defense work - I've got a group of guys behind me I've got a lot of confidence in."

Senior Bryan Peters is the frontrunner to replace Christensen at shortstop, but he'll fight for time with freshmen Jake Placzek and Wes Edrington.

After bursting onto the scene in his freshman campaign in 2012, Pat Kelly will hold down second base after a freshman All-American first season. Scheffert's play also improved on defense under Coach Erstad, and he'll stay on third base after earning a spot on second-team All-Big Ten as a junior in 2012.

Grand Island native Kash Kalkowski will end his roller coaster Nebraska baseball career at first base for the Huskers. Blake Headley can and will play anywhere inside the diamond he's need; the sophomore Omaha native starter made starts at shortstop and third base as a freshman in 2012. He worked at first base in the fall as well.

On offense, one of the biggest position questions remaining falls on the DH, which will likely cycle between Christensen and Pritchard, who says it's "no big deal" who's slotted to hit. He said the Huskers have enough talent and firepower to be comfortable in a number of variations. The proof's there, he said. Now it's time to do it again.

"We know what we can do offensively and we're just gonna go do it," Pritchard said. "I don't think there was a fluke about last year, it's just what we did. This year we'll go do it again."



# Men's & Women's Track & Field



Latvians Janis Leitis and Mara Griva are two of NU's top track athletes in the jumping events.



# Latest Latvian tracksters carry on rich tradition



STORY & PHOTOS BY DARREN IVY

Nebraska's Latvian pipeline keeps pumping out prize recruits and big-time scorers for the Husker men's and women's track and field programs.

The latest Latvians in the limelight are senior Janis Leitis, who joined the Huskers at the beginning of the 2012-13 indoor season, and junior Mara Griva, who has been a six-time All-American already in her two years at Nebraska.

"We have had that for a while," Nebraska head track and field coach Gary Pepin said of the connection to Latvia that started with Ineta Radevica in 2003. "When you are 19, 20, 21, all of a sudden you are heading to somewhere new, if there are some former athletes who have been there or current ones who are there, it really helps.

"The kids that we have brought over from there have done a really good job in the classroom and have been easy to coach. They have been interested in how the team did and been good athletes. We hopefully can continue that. We have another athlete we had signed last year and hopefully we will get her here this fall."

Leitis, who competed in the 2012 Olympics for Latvia, said the opportunity to continue his post-graduate education and run in America were two factors that led him to Lincoln, Neb.

But the biggest factor perhaps, was the opportunity to be with his longtime girlfriend, Griva, whom he has been dating since before she enrolled at Nebraska.

"Before I would run and train and go to school, but there was something missing - my girlfriend," Leitis said. "Now, I train and go to school and compete and at end of day, I also have my girlfriend."

Being reunited has been a highlight for both Latvians this year, but there was the possibility that the two could have been together all the way through had Leitis accepted NU's initial scholarship offer.

"We have known about him for some time," Pepin said. "We recruited him, but I think he felt comfortable with the coaching he had over there and all those kinds of things."

Leitis spent the last four years running and studying at Riga Stradins University in the capitol city of Riga. He was a two-time Latvian national champion in the long jump.

Latvia is a small northern European country about the size and population of Nebraska that borders Estonia, Lithuania and Russia. Being such a small country, Leitis said the elite athletes often ran into one another at competitions and training events, which was how he met Griva.

Griva, who was coached by her father, Baiba, and who has an

older sister, who also competed in the 2012 Olympics, grew up in Ventspils, which is the seventh largest city in Latvia.

When Griva first looked at Nebraska, she said the success fellow Latvians had achieved while competing for the Huskers definitely peaked her interest, but the feats those before her reached made Griva a little nervous about whether or not she could add to their accomplishments.

"I knew that when they came over here, they had made improvements," Griva said. "There also was that pressure to live up to what they had done before me."

After overcoming her initial homesickness, she immersed herself in training and didn't disappoint her Nebraska coaches and teammates.

As a freshman in 2011 at the Big 12 Indoor Track and Field Championships, Griva became the first jumper to sweep the long and triple jump titles at the conference meet since fellow Radevica achieved the feat in 2004.

She has gone on to be a five-time conference champion in the long jump and triple jump while competing in the Big 12 and Big Ten indoor and outdoor championships.

Griva had hoped to represent her native country in the 2012 Olympics also, but an injury slowed her and she was not able to finish in the top three at her national qualifier.

So far this season, Griva and Leitis are among the leaders in the Big Ten and country in their respective events.

In his Husker debut, Leitis won the long jump and the 200 meters at the Holiday Inn meet

Leitis has been plagued by a groin injury, which kept him from doing the long jump at the 2012 Olympics, and it resurfaced before the Razorback Invitational in February. However, he managed to not only run a time of 46.71 seconds to place second in the 400, but he also won the long jump. At the time, his 400 time made him the fastest in the Big Ten and the second fastest in the nation in that distance.

"I've tried to do indoor before, but it's really hard to explain our indoor facilities back home," Leitis said. "After that, this place looks like paradise. It's warm inside, and I think this is one of the key elements helping me improve so much. This facility is just amazing. If you are here, it's a shame on you if you are not using this facility and not improving."

Griva and Leitis will try to continue to improve in preparation for the Big Ten meet on Feb. 22-23 as they try to add to their individual accomplishments and help the women repeat as champions and men improve from their third-place finish last season.

**"I knew that when they came over here, they had made improvements. There also was that pressure to live up to what they had done before me."**

**Mara Griva**  
NU junior track athlete



## Newcomers stepping into outside hitter competition

STORY BY DARREN IVY | PHOTO BY RANCE RISTAU

**D**uring one of Amber and Kadie Rolfzen's many visits to the NU Coliseum the last four years, they were staring up at the National Championship banners for 1995, 2000 and 2006 and noticed a trend.

"There was five years between the first two and six years between the second and third," Amber Rolfzen said. "We joked with Coach [John] Cook that this year would be seven years later and we would get him another our freshman year. He didn't really say much other than that would be good."

Nebraska is coming off an Elite Eight appearance in 2012, but the Huskers lost three All-Americans to graduation and another starter, Lara Dykstra, transferred to Pepperdine.

So if NU is to make a run at its fourth national championship, the reality of it happening likely will depend how fast the Rolfzens can adjust to the Division I level, as well as how senior transfer Kelsey Robinson of Tennessee fits in with her new teammates in Lincoln.

"I have one year and my goal is to win a national championship," said Robinson, who chose NU over UCLA, USC, Oregon, Texas and Pepperdine. "That was one factor that I took into account when I was looking at where I was going to transfer to. I was initially leaning toward the West Coast. My family is important to me and Nebraska is a lot closer to them and I could do everything I want to do here. It's nice to be part of a program where volleyball is a big deal."

The addition of the two highly-touted Rolfzen twins, plus the two-time All-American Robinson, who are all enrolled in classes this semester, should immediately solidify the outside hitter spots that were left wide open with the graduation of All-Americans Gina Mancuso and Hannah Werth. Sophomore Kelsey Fien and redshirt freshman walk-on Alicia Ostrander are the only returning outside hitters on the roster.

The 6-foot-2 Robinson excelled at Tennessee, earning SEC Player of the Year and 2nd Team All-American honors in 2011 and Honorable Mention All-American honors in

2012 before joining three other teammates who departed Knoxville, Tenn. following the 2012 season.

"Kelsey is a great addition to our team," Cook said. "She is a highly skilled outside hitter and accomplished beach player. She will bring experience, leadership and a competitive fire that will impact our team. We tried to recruit her out of high school and feel honored to have her finally be a Husker. Kelsey had many choices but ultimately chose Nebraska with the idea of being a part of history—the first season at the Devaney Center."

Robinson declined to give specifics about her departure from Tennessee, but explained that she was familiar with the NU program from her initial recruitment out of high school when she chose UT over NU and was "very happy" to be a Husker the second time around. Robinson said all but a couple of her college credits transferred so she also would still be able to graduate in December 2013.

"It definitely was a hard decision," said Robinson, who played club volleyball with NU sophomore middle Meghan Haggerty. "I realized I had to dive in and take a risk. Everything has worked out for me and I haven't looked back at all."

Robinson was a two-year captain and leader of the Lady Vols program, and if her first few weeks in Nebraska are any indication she will become a leader for the Huskers also.

"I feel like she already is a leader and she's only been here four weeks," Amber Rolfzen said. "She is one of the biggest competitors I've ever seen. She gets so mad when she loses. There is nothing wrong with wanting to win all the time. She makes me and Kadie and all the other outside hitters work that much harder because she is so good."

The Rolfzens are no slouches themselves, having been named high school All-Americans several times, as well as representing the United States at numerous international competitions. Additionally, they led their team to three-consecutive Class A state volleyball titles as well as being national champions according to several publications.

The Papillion-LaVista South standouts made headlines four years ago when, as eighth-graders, they verbally committed to



NU head coach John Cook to be part of his 2013 recruiting class.

"We are going to be committed longer than we are actually here," Kadie said. "It went fast until the last five months. I am happy to finally be here and get going."

The Rolfzens' path to Nebraska started early on as they were regular attendees at Husker summecamps and standouts in club volleyball. They caught the eye of Cook early on.

"I think they came (to Nebraska's summer volleyball) camp in seventh or eighth grade," Cook said. "When they were in club volleyball they were bigger, stronger, more physical than kids they were playing against. They were the talk of a lot of coaches."

But the 6-foot-3 twins were only listening for the praise and collegiate offer of one person - Cook.

And when he extended the scholarship offer, he had his first two recruits for 2013.

"We definitely weren't going to wait," Kadie Rolfzen said reflecting back to that



Kadie and Amber Rolfzen and Kelsey Robinson all enrolled at UNL in January to get a head start on the 2013 season.



## 2013 Volleyball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME/SCORE
<b>SPRING VOLLEYBALL</b>			
MAR. 30	SOUTH DAKOTA	NU COLISEUM	3 P.M.
APR. 6	IOWA STATE	NU COLISEUM	6 P.M.
APR. 12	CREIGHTON	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
APR. 20	WICHITA STATE	AT WICHITA, KAN.	TBA
SEPT. 1	UC-IRVINE	AT IRVINE, CALIF.	W 3-0
<b>SAND VOLLEYBALL</b>			
MAR. 14	FLORIDA STATE	AT CHULA VISTA, CA	TBA
MAR. 15	CHULA VISTA TOURNEY	AT CHULA VISTA, CA	TBA
MAR. 16	CHULA VISTA TOURNEY	AT CHULA VISTA, CA	TBA
MAR. 17	GRAND CANYON	AT CHULA VISTA, CA	TBA
MAR. 19	LONG BEACH STATE	AT LONG BEACH, CA	TBA
MAR. 20	UC-IRVINE	AT IRVINE, CA	TBA
MAR. 21	UCLA	AT SANTA MONICA, CA	TBA
MAR. 22	HAWAII	AT LOS ANGELES, CA	TBA
MAR. 22	USC	AT LOS ANGELES, CA	TBA

about Melanie when she sent video to most of the Big Ten schools. We then had a chance to see her and bring her in on a visit. She is a very experienced player as her high school team is made up of some of the best players in the country and competes in a professional league in Germany. ... She is somebody that has the experience and physical training to compete for a spot right away."

### Kira Larson

Hometown: Fargo, N.D.

Ht: 6-3

Position: middle blocker.

Coach Cook says: "She does not have as much high-level experience as the rest of the class, but her competitiveness and desire to be great will accelerate her at a very fast pace when she gets here. On a side note, her sister competed (in volleyball) at Northwest Missouri State, her dad actually ran track for (former NU coach) Jay Dirksen and her mom was also a track athlete and they are now both track coaches. She also used to baby-sit for Nebraska head basketball coach Tim Miles."

### Justine Wong-Orantes

Hometown: Cypress, Calif.

Ht: 5-6

Position: setter.

Coach Cook says: "Justine was a late recruit for us, we discovered her at the Junior Olympics last July. We're recruiting her as a libero, but she has been a setter on her club team. She kind of flew under the radar until her team played her at libero for a game, which is when we saw her. She played in Junior World Beach Championships and was the youngest AAA beach player ever at 12 years old."

decision. "Everybody wants to go there. For me and Amber, it was our dream school. If your dream school offers, why not take it."

The Rolfzens feel fortunate to have played four years for former Husker volleyball player Gwen Egbert at Papillion-LaVista South. Egbert and Cook communicated frequently and she made sure the Rolfzens and fellow 2013 signee Kelly Hunter, were always pushed in practice.

"She would make us accountable," Kadie said. "Now, that we've gotten here and are doing a practice drill, we're like that is a drill Coach Egbert had us do and it's not like we have to be Newbies."

Graduating a semester early was something the Rolfzens decided to do when they were sophomores.

"We thought that if we came in six months early, we would have a head start," Kadie said. "It's a bonus that we

get a whole new season," Kadie added about the sand volleyball schedule. "We will go right into it. There won't be time to adjust. It's like here we are."

Also part of the class of 2013 are Kelly Hunter of Papillion-LaVista South, Kira Larson, Melanie Keil and libero Justin Wong-Oranges, but those players won't practice until the fall.

### Kelly Hunter

Hometown: Papillion

Ht: 5-11

Position: setter.

Hunter picked up another national honor in February when she was named winner of the Andi Collins Award, given annually to the country's top high school senior setter by PrepVolleyball.com.

### Melanie Keil

Hometown: Berlin

Ht: 6-foot

Position: middle blocker.

Coach Cook says: "We first found out



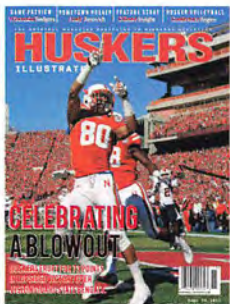
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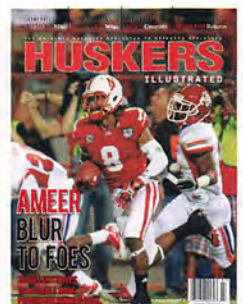
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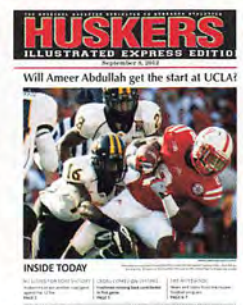
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# Sand Volleyball

## Sand Volleyball FAQ

When Kelsey Robinson decided to transfer from the University of Tennessee to Nebraska, she knew there was a 50-50 chance that Nebraska would add sand volleyball as a sport.

It wasn't until she arrived on campus that Robinson, who is an accomplished sand volleyball player, found out that she would have an opportunity to compete for the newly announced Huskers sand volleyball team.

"Coach Osborne and Coach Cook had discussions about the possibility of adding sand volleyball over the past few months and things came together quickly in recent weeks," NU athletic director Shawn Eichorst said at the Jan. 9 announcement of the program. "We are excited to sponsor a sport that is beginning to emerge on the national level, and plan to grow with the sport in the coming years. Our volleyball program has a remarkable record of success over a long period of time, and we hope to add to that legacy through our sand volleyball team in the years ahead."

The Huskers will open their inaugural season of sand volleyball play on Thursday, March 14 at Chula Vista, Calif., against Florida State.

Here is another look at this new sport at Nebraska.

### When is the Sand Volleyball season?

Sand volleyball is a spring team sport, just like softball and baseball. The Division I playing season starts the first Thursday in March and ends eight weeks later or the end of the school year, whichever comes first.

### How many competitions must teams play?

#### How many can they play?

You must play at least eight dates with three of the competitions being dual matches. The maximum number of competitions is 16 dates.

### What is the format for play?

Each school will field five doubles teams ranked by ability. Each doubles team plays again the corresponding team or teams from other schools. In a dual meet, the winning team is the school winning three or five matches. Individual matches are two sets to 21, with a tie breaker set to 15 if needed. All sets are rally scoring and must be won by two points. Tournament play will still employ flights. Points are awarded based on finish in each of the five brackets and a total team score determines the winner of the event.

### Will the NCAA sponsor a championship in Sand Volleyball?

When 40 institutions in DI and DII have sponsored varsity programs for two years, the NCAA will sponsor an NCAA Championships.

### Where are the 2013 Sand Volleyball Championships?

Gulf Shores, Alabama will host the collegiate women's sand volleyball championships through 2015.

### How many schools sponsor Sand Volleyball as a sport?

As of Jan. 23, 2013, there are 29.

### Will Sand Volleyball have a different coaching staff from the Court Volleyball team?



Kelsey Robinson makes a kill during NU's outdoor practice on Feb. 7 at Spikes in Lincoln.

It depends on the institution. DI NCAA regulations specify that Sand Volleyball may have a maximum of two coaches and Court Volleyball may have a maximum of three coaches. The regulations do not speak to coaches being responsible for more than one sport so an athletics department could assign one or two of the current court coaches to responsibilities with the Sand VB team or they could hire new coaches to fill those positions. There are no coaching staff restrictions in DII, so again the decision rests with the institution.

### How is the sport of Sand Volleyball different from Court Volleyball?

Beyond the obvious differences in number of players on a side and the surface for competition, Sand volleyball is officiated much differently than Court VB. No open handed tipping is allowed and setting is called so tightly in Sand volleyball that the bump set is more popular than the overhead set. Also, the block touch counts as the first of the three allowable contacts. Another difference is that coaches may only speak to players or give them any kind of input or feedback during time-outs and between sets. Finally, to mitigate the impact of wind and sun, the players switch sides of the court every seven points in a 21 point set and every five points in a 15 point set.



## Wong wows coaches with all-around efforts

STORY BY DARREN IVY | PHOTO COURTESY OF NU MEDIA RELATIONS

**N**ebraska head women's gymnastics coach Dan Kendig likes to tell the story of how junior Emily Wong struggled on the uneven bars when she first arrived on campus as a freshman.

"When she came in as a freshman, the bars weren't pretty," Kendig said. "Her body lines were not good. She had like a 7.5 score. By the end of her freshman year, she got a 9.9 and was a first-team All-American on the bars. She came in early to get better, she listened and she worked hard. She is definitely a success story. It's hard to find kids like her. I would like to find another half dozen girls like her."

On a team full of dynamic gymnasts, Kendig said Wong has many qualities that make her stand out for the ninth-ranked Huskers.

"She's the total package," Kendig said. "It starts out with her and what she brings everyday. She has a tremendous work ethic and great personality. She is focused and ready to go every day at practice. You can hear her laugh anywhere. She is a great teammate. You can hear her voice above all others when she is yelling for her teammates."

Wong, 20, grew up following her two older sisters Melissa, who is now 25, and Lindsay, who is now 23, to gymnastics practice at Red River Valley Club in Grand Forks, N.D. However, she is the only one in her family to do collegiate gymnastics.

"I think Lindsay would have done college gymnastics, but she had two hip surgeries in ninth grade," said Wong, who also competed in dance and soccer. "My main focus was gymnastics."

Being the youngest, Wong developed her work ethic from watching her older sisters and had good values instilled into her by her parents John and Karen Wong.

Her club also served as the training facility for former NU gymnast Lora Evenstad, who graduated in 2012.

"I asked her a lot of questions," said Wong, who also considered going to Iowa State. "I knew I had to make my own decision."

Wong said she and Evenstad are two of five Division I gymnasts ever to come out of North Dakota.

"It is not known for being a gymnastics hot bed," Kendig said. "I think we have gotten two of the better ones."

Coming from a smaller state, Wong had work to do once she got to Nebraska to be competitive in every event at the Division I level. But Wong had those intangibles that can't be coached.

"She had a good foundation and came in with the right attitude to get better," Kendig said.

Last year, Wong won the All-Around at the Big Ten Championships and was a second-team All-American in the All-Around at the NCAA Nationals.

She is currently ranked fourth nationally in the All-Around and also is ranked fifth in the bars and ninth on the floor.

Kendig believes Wong has the tools this season to become just his third ever NCAA All-Around champion, but neither him nor his junior gymnast go into any meet with that goal.

"I've coached two NCAA All-Around champions [Heather Brink in 2000 and Rochelle Simpson in 2003] and neither went in thinking

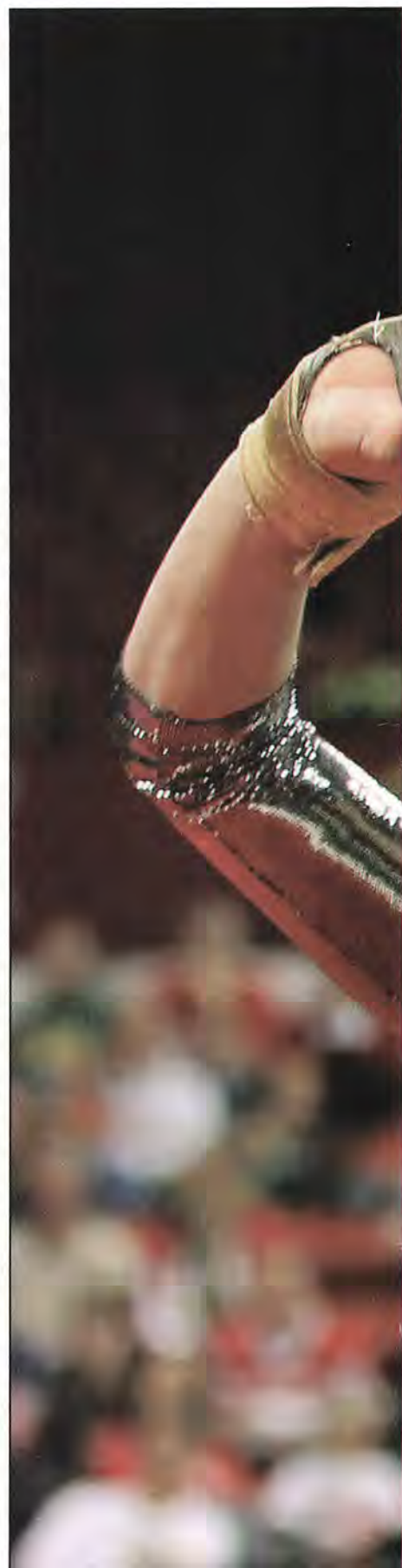
they were going to be All-Around champions," Kendig said. "They went in thinking they were going to do the best they could on each event and the overall outcome takes care of itself."

Wong's main goals are team ones, which include repeating as Big Ten champions at the conference meet on March 23 at East Lansing and making it to Super Six team finals on April 20.

"Not making the Super Six was really hard last season and has provided our whole team with a lot of motivation this season," Wong said.

**"She is definitely a success story. It's hard to find kids like her. I would like to find another half a dozen girls like her."**

**Dan Kendig  
NU Gymnastics Coach**





NU junior Emily Wong competes for the Huskers at a meet earlier this season.





## Huskers reach higher levels

STORY BY DARREN IVY | PHOTOS BY JOE MIXAN

**A**s a freshman, Hayley Martin used to swim most of her laps in lanes 9 and 10 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center Natatorium. From these lanes, she often found herself staring up at the school record board, which included the names of many of the Husker swimming legends.

"I had a perfect view of the times from those lanes," said Martin, who is from Monona, Wis. "I thought maybe someday, I would get the 100 freestyle record."

With just the Big Ten Conference Meet and possibly the NCAA Championships left in her career, Martin still hasn't eclipsed the 100-meter freestyle mark of 48.76 set by Therese Alshammar in 1999.

However, at the Hawkeye Invitational earlier this season at Iowa City, Martin broke another school record that was held by Alshammar – the 100-meter backstroke.

Martin's time of 54.25 eclipsed the previous mark of 54.77 that had been set in 1998.

"I never thought I would break the 100-meter backstroke record," said Martin, who only swam that race a handful of times before this season.



HAYLEY MARTIN

Morales said it was a "really impressive" record.

"That is a pretty studly name we will be taking off that board," Morales said. "She is like a 5-time Olympian and still making national teams in Sweden. To actually be able take down one of those names is impressive."

What led to the decision to try the 100 backstroke was the fact that Martin didn't feel she started quick enough to be competitive in the 50-meter freestyle anymore.

"Her backstroke really came together for her this season," Morales said. "We saw it in the early season that her backstroke started to take off so we continued in that direction. She is a more confident swimmer, stronger, her underwater work is better. All those things came together. That is taking it to a much higher level."

The past two seasons, Martin has been one of the leaders of the team, often being near the top in terms of top five finishes at competitions.

Martin finished a successful 2011-12 season by recording 17 top-five finishes and she won eight individual titles across four events.

Morales said she also is an important member of all the Husker relays this season, which have turned in some marks that rank on the all-time charts.

Behind Martin and many other improved swimmers and divers, NU ended its regular season on Feb. 2 with one win and two losses at the Northwestern Invitational held at Northwestern's

Coach Pablo Morales talks to the NU swimming and diving team after a home meet earlier this season.



Norris Aquatics Center. The Huskers won their dual meet against Northwestern by a score of 198-171 but fell to No. 15 Ohio State and Iowa by respective scores of 224-134 and 191-179.

With Saturday's results, Nebraska finished the regular season with a dual meet record of 12-3. Their 12 victories are a new school record, surpassing the 1986-87 and 1989-90 squads that finished with 11 wins.

Eight was the previous season-best win total for Morales.

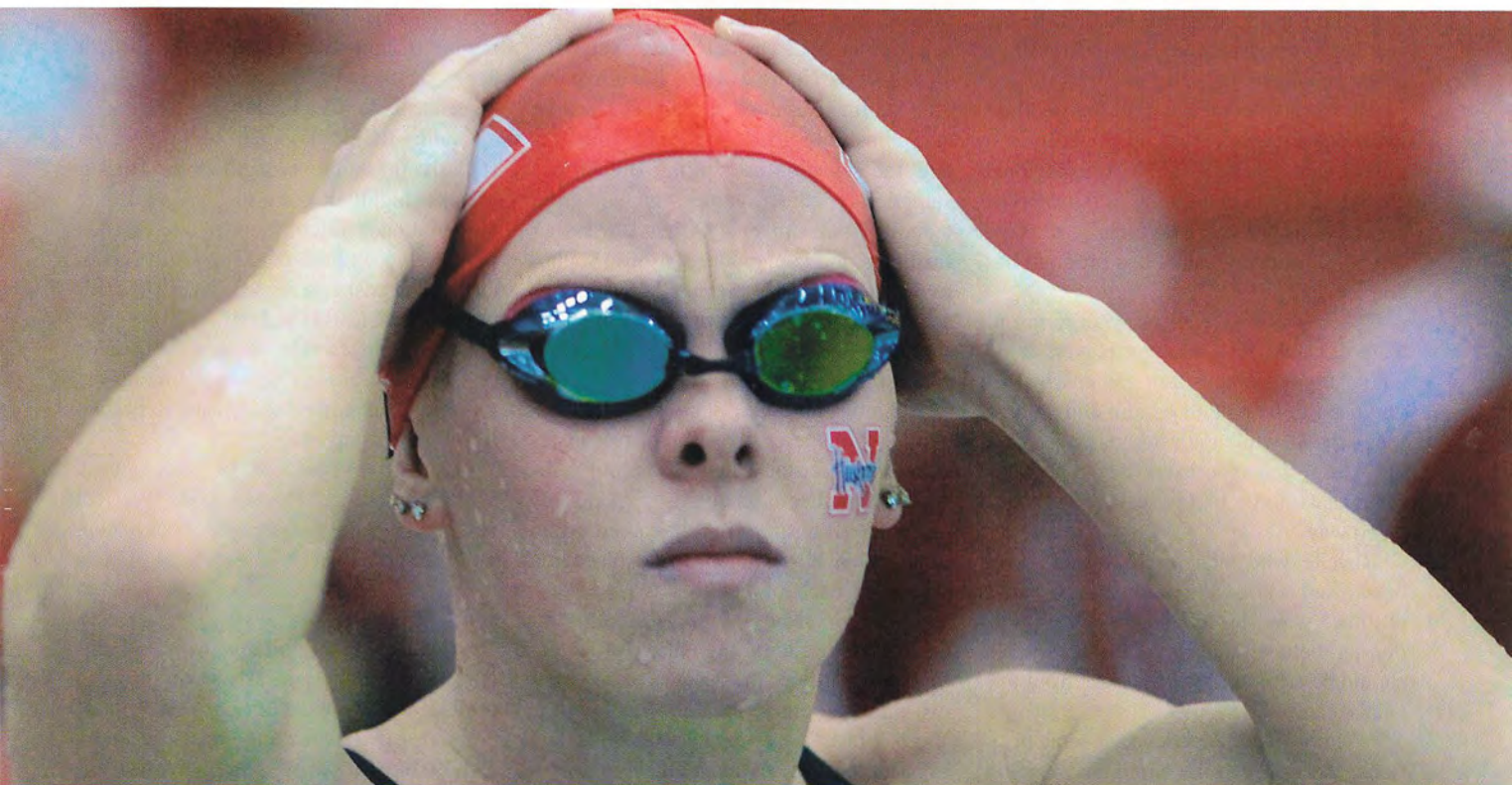
"In more ways that, it's been one of the better seasons that we've had since I've been here in terms of our preparation, their attitude, their support for one another and making the commitment and to take things to a higher level," Morales said.

"It's been a very exceptional season. Our girls have competed well throughout the season, despite the fact that a lot of the season they were involved in some very heavy training and not quite peak."

The Huskers already have several swimmers who have posted B standard qualifying marks for the NCAA Championships, but are hoping to improve those marks to automatic standards when they return to the pool at the Big Ten Conference Meet on Feb. 20-23 in Minneapolis.

"Two is the most we have ever qualified in a year since I have been here," said Morales, who came to Nebraska in 2001. "Hopefully everything will come together in a couple weeks and we can finish the year on a high note."







## Revelle will sport a youthful team

*Huskers hope to get back to postseason after a rare absence last season.*

STORY COURTESY OF NU MEDIA RELATIONS

**SPRING IS OFTEN THOUGHT OF AS A TIME OF OPTIMISM, NEW BEGINNINGS AND HOPE. THOSE SAME ADJECTIVES CAN ALSO APPLY TO THE 16 NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS WHO WILL HIT THE SOFTBALL FIELD THIS SPRING, ESPECIALLY THE SEVEN FRESHMEN WHO WILL BEGIN THEIR FIRST COLLEGIATE SEASON.**

Keeping with the theme of "new beginnings," nearly 45 percent of the NU roster consists of freshmen and 10 of NU's 16 players are in their first or second year as Huskers.

Just as the dawn of spring elicits optimism and the promise of better days, Nebraska's program feels rejuvenated by the influx of young talent. Head Coach Rhonda Revelle hopes it's that eagerness and enthusiasm that will push Nebraska to a trip back to the NCAA Tournament, after the Huskers missed the postseason for only the second time in 18 years last season.

"This is a hungry group of young ladies," Revelle said. "We have a lot of youth and one of the great things about freshmen is the enthusiasm they bring to the field. Everything is new to them, and they are eager to prove themselves. The energy they create is contagious.

"But our veterans are also hungry. Our juniors and seniors were on the cusp of a top-10 ranking and an NCAA Regional championship in 2011, only to fall short of expectations last year. Our older players are driven to produce results this program has come to expect.

"There's a real sense of synergy in our team dynamic. The younger players bring the contagious enthusiasm and energy that you need to be able to endure and enjoy a long season, while the veterans possess the knowledge and experience to help the team focus that energy in a positive, results-oriented way."

Revelle, who enters her 21st year at Nebraska and is poised to become the school's all-time wins leader across all sports, doesn't believe that the Huskers' youth should be a reason to expect less from this year's team.

"We do have inexperience at some positions, especially in the circle, and we will

rely heavily on our freshmen," Revelle said.

"Especially early in the year, fans may see a starting lineup that has four or five freshmen in it. But the coaches feel this freshman class is very talented, and that's why we're not afraid to throw them into the fire. I also don't think you can underestimate or overstate the success of our upperclassmen.

"We return four starters on the infield and one in the outfield and bring back five players who have been an all-conference player or an All-American. We have a solid nucleus of proven talent, and we have a very promising freshman class with the ability to push our returning starters and contribute immediately, which we expect them to do."

Nebraska returns a total of six starters, despite a freshman-laden roster and the loss of six seniors from 2012. The returning starters boast multiple years of starting experience. In the outfield, senior Brooke Thomason, a two-time all-conference selection, has started each of the last three years, earning 159 career starts. On the infield, senior Gabby Banda has been a three-year starter on the left side of the Husker infield. Banda, a third-team All-Big Ten selection in 2012, owns 165 career starts.

Classmate Courtney Breault is also back, after starting at second base in her first year at Nebraska in 2012. A second-team All-Big Ten selection last spring, Breault has started 141 career games, including 95 games at the University of Arkansas her freshman and sophomore seasons. Sophomore Mattie Fowler started all 55 games as a freshman last season, primarily at shortstop, although she is still recovering from offseason knee surgery.

Behind the plate, junior Taylor Edwards returns after two straight seasons as Nebraska's starting catcher. The only All-America catcher in school history, Edwards has made 108 starts in her career, while catching an all-conference and all-region pitcher in each of her first two seasons. Taylor's twin sister Tatum also returns for the Big Red. Tatum has made 106 career starts, primarily as the designated player. A two-time all-conference honoree, Tatum is also Nebraska's only pitcher with collegiate experience, twice earning Big Ten pitcher-

of-the-week honors last season.

Overall, the Huskers return 68 percent of their position starts from last season and 68 percent of their total plate appearances from 2012. But while the offense brings back plenty of production from what have been two of the top offensive seasons in school history the last two years, Nebraska's pitching staff owns far less experience.

Tatum Edwards is the only Husker pitcher with collegiate experience, as she has made 35 appearances and 25 starts over her first two seasons. Edwards owns a 16-5 career record with a 2.69 ERA. The hard-throwing right-hander with a devastating changeup has the ability to emerge as the Huskers' ace. Opponents have hit only .209 off Edwards in her career, with just 15 extra-base hits in 484 career at bats. While she has proven hard to hit, Edwards has been hurt by a lack of control. She has walked 62 batters and hit 29 in only 130.0 career innings.

Freshman right-hander Emily Lockman is also expected to see extensive action in the circle this spring. The 2012 California Gatorade Player of the Year and first-team high school All-American is a poised and mature freshman, traits that should benefit her as she takes on the challenge of being a key contributor as a freshman pitcher.

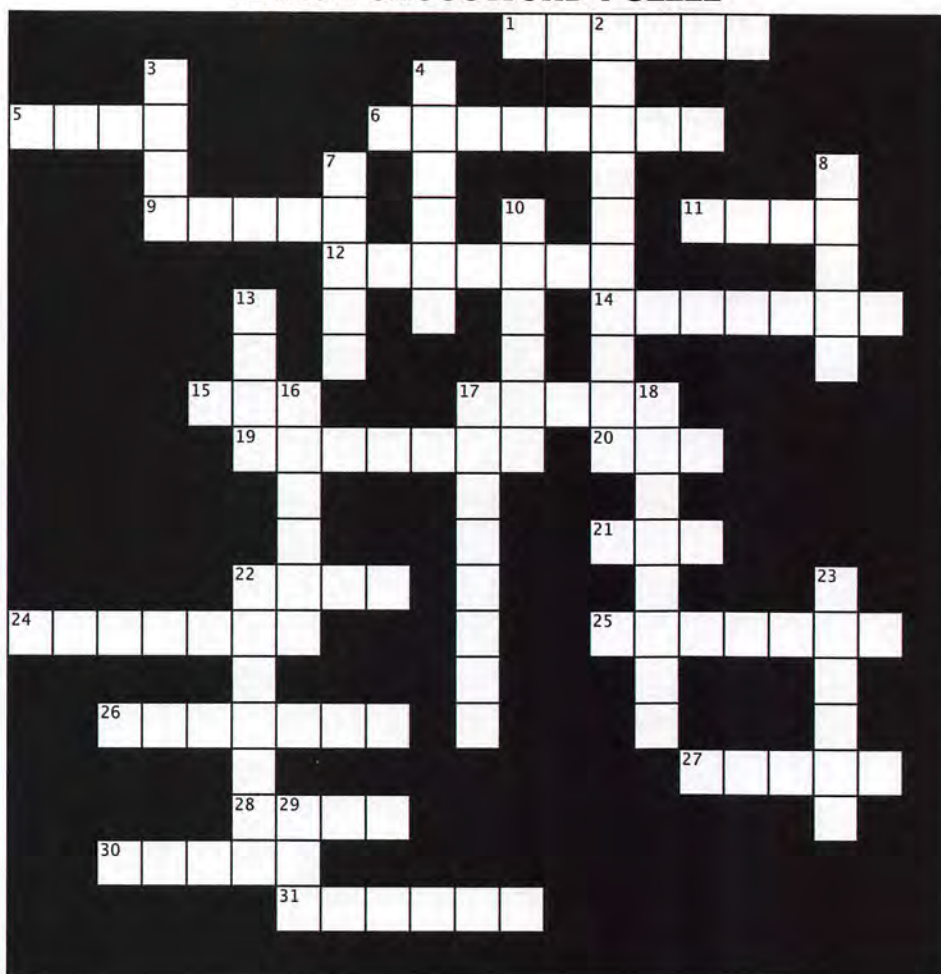
Aiding the development of the pitching staff should be the strength of the Husker offense, highlighted by the five returning all-conference hitters. Nebraska has posted the top two on-base percentages in school history the past two seasons, while recording the No. 1 (2011) and No. 3 (2012) slugging percentages. The Huskers' run totals the last two seasons also rank among the top-five marks in school history, despite fewer games played.

"Our offense should be very strong again this spring," Revelle said. "We feel really good about the strength of our lineup, top-to-bottom. We've scored a lot of runs the past few seasons, and we expect that to continue this year.

"Having a strong offense will also benefit our pitching staff. If our offense can produce to its potential, it will take a lot of pressure off the pitching staff, especially early in the season. We feel good about the



# MARCH CROSSWORD PUZZLE



## Across

1. Defensive back from Louisiana in 2013 recruiting class
5. 2013 non-conference opponent
6. 2013 recruit who is son of former Husker
9. Number of recruits in 2013 class from California
11. Defensive tackle who is transferring from NU
12. Opponent in 2013 season-opener
14. Junior college defensive end in 2013 class
15. 2009 Lombardi Award winner
17. 2014 non-conference opponent
19. Ex-Husker who was assistant coach in Super Bowl XLVII
20. Recruiting coordinator
21. Number of offensive linemen in 2013 class
22. Ex-Husker who played for Super Bowl champs
24. Quarterback in 2013 recruiting class
25. Defensive tackle from Kansas City in 2013 class
26. Wide receiver from Ohio in 2013 class
27. Number of recruits in 2013 class from Florida
28. Linebacker from Ohio in 2013 class
30. Wide receiver from Louisiana in 2013 class
31. Former NU punter, now NU baseball coach

## Down

2. April 6 event
3. Tight end from Ohio in 2013 class
4. Running back from Texas in 2013 class
7. Running back from California in 2013 class
8. Running back who is transferring from NU
10. Offensive lineman from Illinois junior college in 2013 class
13. Number of recruits in 2013 class from Texas
16. Offensive lineman from Kansas City in 2013 class
17. Husker whose brother was in 2013 recruiting class
18. Opponent in 2013 Big Ten opener
22. Offensive lineman from California junior college in 2013 class
23. Offensive lineman from Canada in 2013 class
29. Number of recruits in 2013 class from Nebraska

potential of our pitchers, but their early-season development will be a key toward positioning ourselves to meet our season goals."

Revelle also noted that the Huskers are more athletic this season, something that should help the defense behind the pitchers.

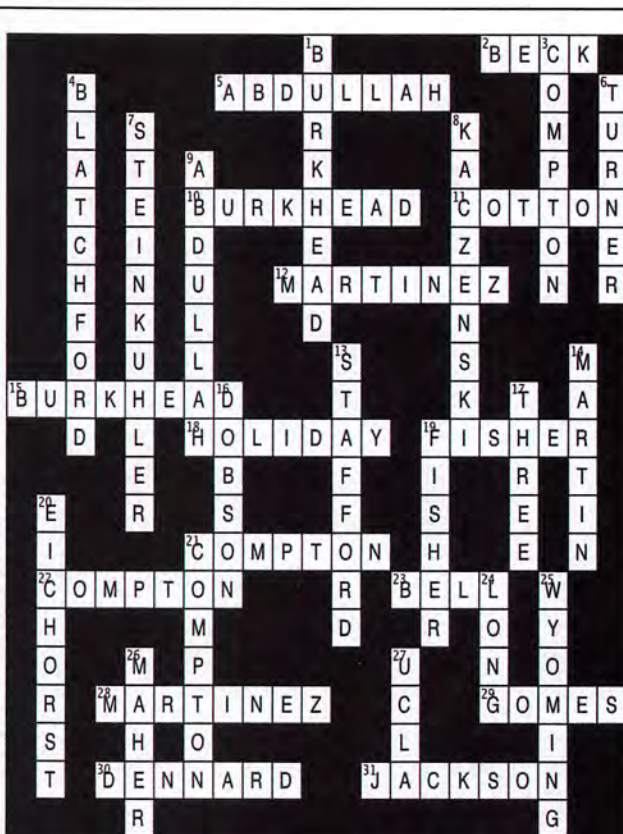
"We've relied a lot on the strikeout the past few seasons, but that may not be the case this season," she said. "We want our pitchers to be around the plate and when you're throwing strikes and pitching to contact, the ball is going to be put in play. We struggled a bit defensively last year, but our range is better than it has been and that should lead to extra outs we may not have gotten last year."

The extra outs and improved defense could be a huge key for Nebraska. Last season, the Huskers posted their lowest fielding percentage in 15 years, while allowing almost one unearned run per game. Unearned runs provided the winning margin in six of Nebraska's 22 losses last season, and six more wins likely would have gotten the Huskers into the NCAA Tournament, a standard program expectation.

Speaking of program expectations, Revelle expects this spring of "new beginnings" to produce familiar results.

"The expectations for this program are to compete for a conference title and play in the postseason," Revelle said. "We expect that at the beginning of every season, and this year is no different. We have some challenges to overcome, but that's true of any season. We have the pieces necessary for a successful season. Now it's just about coming together as one team with one dream."

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## 2013 GAMES

08/31	WYOMING	TBA
09/07	@ SOUTHERN MISS	TBA
09/14	UCLA	TBA
10/05	ILLINOIS	TBA
10/12	@ PURDUE	TBA
10/19	BYE WEEK	TBA
10/26	@ MINNESOTA	TBA
11/02	NORTHWESTERN	TBA
11/09	@ MICHIGAN	TBA
11/16	MICHIGAN STATE	TBA
11/23	@ PENN STATE	TBA
11/30	IOWA	TBA
12/07	BIG TEN CHAMP.	TBA
XX/XX	BOWL GAME	TBA